



*The Pied
Piper—
A. A. Dixon.*



THE ROYAL TREASURY OF STORY AND SONG

Part IV.

GOLDEN GIFTS



THOMAS NELSON AND SONS
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The Poet Homer—Harry Bates.

(Photo by Hollyer.)

THE ROYAL TREASURY.

Part IV.—GOLDEN GIFTS.

THE GOLDEN TOUCH.

I.—Midas the Miser.

ONCE upon a time there lived a very rich king, whose name was Midas; and he had a little daughter, whom nobody but myself ever heard of, and whose name I either never knew or have entirely forgotten. So, because I love odd names for little girls, I choose to call her Marygold.

This King Midas was fonder of gold than of anything else in the world. He valued his royal crown chiefly because it was composed of that precious metal. If he loved anything better or half as well, it was the one little maiden who played so merrily around her father's footstool. But the more Midas loved his daughter, the more did he desire and seek

for wealth. He thought, foolish man, that the best thing he could possibly do for this dear child would be to bequeath her the largest pile of yellow, glistening coin that had ever been heaped together since the world was made. Thus he gave all his thoughts and all his time to this one purpose.

At length (as people always grow more and more foolish, unless they take care to grow wiser and wiser) Midas had got to be so exceedingly unreasonable that he could scarcely bear to see or touch any object that was not made of gold. He made it his custom, therefore, to pass a large portion of every day in a dark and dreary apartment under ground, in the basement of his palace. It was here that he kept his wealth.

To this dismal hole—for it was little better than a dungeon—Midas betook himself whenever he wanted to be particularly happy. Here, after carefully locking the door, he would take a bag of gold coins, or a gold cup as big as a wash-bowl, or a heavy golden bar, or a peck measure of gold-dust, and bring it from the obscure corner of the room into the one bright and narrow sunbeam that fell from the dungeon-like window.

He valued the sunbeam for no other reason

than that his treasure would not shine without its help. And then he would reckon over the coins in the bag; toss up the bar, and catch it as it came down; sift the gold-dust through his fingers; look at the funny image of his own face as reflected in the burnished surface of the cup; and whisper to himself, "O Midas, rich King Midas, what a happy man art thou!" But it was laughable to see how the image of his face kept grinning at him out of the polished cup. It seemed to be aware of his foolish behaviour, and to have a naughty inclination to make fun of him.

Midas called himself a happy man, but felt that he was not yet quite so happy as he might be. The very height of enjoyment would never be reached unless the whole world were to become his treasure-room, and be filled with yellow metal which should be all his own.

II.—The Visit of Quicksilver.

Midas was enjoying himself in his treasure-room one day as usual, when he perceived a shadow fall over the heaps of gold; and looking suddenly up, what should he behold but the figure of a stranger, standing in the bright and narrow sunbeam! It was that of a young man, with a cheerful and ruddy face.



As Midas knew that he had carefully turned the key in the lock, and that no mortal strength could possibly avail to break into his treasure-room, he of course concluded that his visitor must be something more than mortal.

The stranger gazed about the room; and when his lustrous smile had glistened upon all the golden objects that were there, he turned again to Midas.

"You are a wealthy man, friend Midas," he observed. "I doubt whether any other four walls on earth contain so much gold as you have contrived to pile up in this room."

"I have done pretty well—pretty well," answered Midas, in a discontented tone. "But, after all, it is but a trifle, when you consider that it has taken me my whole life to get it together. If one could live a thousand years, he might have time to grow rich!"

"What!" exclaimed the stranger. "Then you are not satisfied?"

Midas shook his head.

"And, pray, what *would* satisfy you?" asked the stranger. "Merely for the curiosity of the thing, I should be glad to know."

Midas paused and meditated. At last a bright idea occurred to him. It seemed really



You are a wealthy man, friend Midas," said the stranger.

as bright as the glistening metal which he loved so much.

Raising his head, he looked the lustrous stranger in the face.

"Well, Midas," observed the visitor, "I see that you have at length hit upon something that will satisfy you. Tell me your wish."

"It is only this," replied Midas. "I am weary of collecting my treasures with so much trouble, and beholding the heap so diminutive after I have done my best. *I wish everything that I touch to be changed to gold!*"

The stranger's smile grew so very broad that it seemed to fill the room like an outburst of the sun gleaming into a shadowy dell, where the yellow autumnal leaves—for so looked the lumps and particles of gold—lie strewn in the glow of light.

"The Golden Touch!" exclaimed he. "You certainly deserve credit, friend Midas, for so brilliant a thought. But are you quite sure that this will satisfy you?"

"How could it fail?" said Midas.

"And will you never regret the possession of it?"

"What could induce me?" asked Midas. "I ask nothing else to render me perfectly happy."

"Be it as you wish, then," replied the

stranger, waving his hand in token of farewell. "To-morrow at sunrise you will find yourself gifted with the Golden Touch."

III.—The Stranger's Gift.

King Midas went to bed, and slept until the earliest sunbeam shone through the window and gilded the ceiling over his head. It seemed to him that this bright yellow sunbeam was reflected in rather a singular way on the white covering of the bed. Looking more closely, what was his astonishment when he found that this linen fabric had been changed to what seemed a woven texture of the purest and brightest gold! The Golden Touch had come to him with the first sunbeam.

Midas started up in a kind of joyful frenzy, and ran about the room, grasping at everything that happened to be in his way. He seized one of the bed-posts, and it became immediately a fluted golden pillar. He pulled aside a window curtain, in order to admit a clear spectacle of the wonders which he was performing, and the tassel grew heavy in his hand—a mass of gold.

He hurriedly put on his clothes, and was enraptured to see himself in a magnificent suit of gold cloth, which kept its flexibility and softness, although it burdened him a little with

its weight. He drew out his handkerchief, which little Marygold had hemmed for him. That was likewise gold, with the dear child's neat and pretty stitches running all along the border in gold thread!

Now King Midas was so exalted by his good fortune that the palace did not seem sufficiently spacious to contain him. He therefore went downstairs, and smiled on observing that the balustrade of the staircase became a bar of burnished gold as his hand passed over it in his descent. He lifted the door-latch (it was brass only a moment ago, but golden when his fingers quitted it), and emerged into the garden.

Here, as it happened, he found a great number of beautiful roses in full bloom, and others in all the stages of lovely bud and blossom. Very delicious was their fragrance in the morning breeze. Their delicate blush was one of the fairest sights in the world, so gentle, so modest, and so full of sweet tranquillity did these roses seem to be.

But Midas knew a way to make them far more precious, according to his way of thinking, than roses had ever been before. So he took great pains in going from bush to bush, and used his magic touch until every flower and bud, and even the worms at the heart of some



of them, were changed to gold. By the time this good work was completed, King Midas was summoned to breakfast; and as the morning air had given him an excellent appetite, he made haste back to the palace.

What the usual breakfast of a king was in the days of Midas I really do not know, and cannot stop now to find out. To the best of my belief, however, on this particular morning the breakfast consisted of hot cakes, some nice little brook trout, roasted potatoes, fresh-boiled eggs, and coffee, for King Midas himself, and a bowl of bread and milk for his daughter Marygold. At all events, this is a breakfast fit to set before a king; and whether he had it or not, King Midas could not have had a better.

IV.—A Golden Breakfast.

Little Marygold had not yet made her appearance. Her father therefore ordered her to be called, and seating himself at table, awaited the child's coming, in order to begin his own breakfast. To do Midas justice, he really loved his daughter, and he loved her so much the more this morning on account of the good fortune which had befallen him.

Soon Marygold slowly and disconsolately opened the door, and showed herself with her

apron at her eyes, sobbing as if her heart would break.

"How now, my little lady!" cried Midas. "Pray, what is the matter with you this bright morning?"

Marygold, without taking the apron from her eyes, held out her hand, in which was one of the roses that Midas had so recently changed.

"Beautiful!" exclaimed her father. "And what is there in this magnificent golden rose to make you cry?"

"Ah, dear father," answered the child, as well as her sobs would let her, "it is not beautiful, but the ugliest flower that ever grew! As soon as I was dressed I ran into the garden to gather some roses for you, because I know you like them, and like them the better when gathered by your little daughter. But, oh dear, dear me! what do you think has happened? Such a misfortune! All the beautiful roses, that smelled so sweetly and had so many lovely blushes, are blighted and spoiled! They are grown quite yellow, as you see this one, and have no longer any fragrance! What can have been the matter with them?"

"Pooh, my dear little girl, pray don't cry about it!" said Midas, who was ashamed to confess that he himself had wrought the change

which so greatly afflicted her. "Sit down and eat your bread and milk. You will find it easy enough to exchange a golden rose like that, which will last hundreds of years, for an ordinary one, which would wither in a day."

"I don't care for such roses as this!" cried Marygold, tossing it away with contempt. "It has no smell, and the hard petals prick my nose!"

The child now sat down to the table.

Midas, meanwhile, had poured out a cup of coffee; and as a matter of course, the coffee-pot, whatever metal it may have been when he took it up, was gold when he set it down. He thought to himself that it was rather an extravagant style of splendour, in a king of his simple habits, to breakfast off a service of gold, and began to be puzzled with the difficulty of keeping his treasures safe. The cupboard and the kitchen would no longer be a secure place of deposit for articles so valuable as golden bowls and coffee-pots.

Amid these thoughts he lifted a spoonful of coffee to his lips, and, sipping it, was astonished to perceive that the instant his lips touched the liquid it became molten gold, and the next moment hardened into a lump!

"Ha!" exclaimed Midas, rather aghast.



He took one of the nice little trout on his plate, and, by way of experiment, touched its tail with his finger. To his horror, it was immediately changed from an admirably fried brook trout into a fish of gold.

"Well, this is awkward!" thought he, leaning back in his chair, and looking quite enviously at little Marygold, who was now eating her bread and milk with great satisfaction. "Such a costly breakfast before me, and nothing that can be eaten!"

V.—A Golden Daughter.

And truly, my dear young friends, did you ever hear of such a pitiable case in all your lives? Here was the richest breakfast that could be set before a king, and its very richness made it absolutely good for nothing. The poorest labourer, sitting down to his crust of bread and cup of water, was far better off than King Midas, whose delicate food was really worth its weight in gold.

And what was to be done? Already at breakfast Midas was excessively hungry: would he be less so by dinner-time? And how ravenous would be his appetite for supper, which must undoubtedly consist of the same sort of dishes as those now before him! How many days, think you, would he survive this rich fare?



'I don't care for such roses!' cried Marygold. (See page 17.)

These reflections so troubled wise King Midas that he began to doubt whether, after all, riches are the one desirable thing in the world, or even the most desirable.

So great was his hunger, and so great was the perplexity of his situation, that he groaned aloud, and very grievously too. Our pretty Marygold could endure it no longer. She sat a moment gazing at her father, and trying, with all the might of her little wits, to find out what was the matter with him. Then, with a sweet and sorrowful impulse to comfort him, she started from her chair, and running to Midas, threw her arms affectionately about his knees. He bent down and kissed her. He felt that his little daughter's love was worth a thousand times more than he had gained by the Golden Touch.

"My precious, precious Marygold!" cried he.

But Marygold made no answer.

Alas! what had he done? How fatal was the gift which the stranger had bestowed! The moment the lips of Midas touched Marygold's forehead a change had taken place. Her sweet, rosy face, so full of affection as it had been, assumed a glittering yellow colour, with yellow tear-drops hardening on her cheeks. Her beautiful brown ringlets took the same tint.

Her soft and tender little form grew hard and inflexible within her father's encircling arms. Oh, terrible misfortune! The victim of his craving for wealth, little Marygold was a human child no longer, but a golden statue!

It would be too sad a story if I were to tell you how Midas, in the fullness of all his gratified desires, began to wring his hands and bemoan himself; and how he could neither bear to look at Marygold, nor yet to look away from her. Except when his eyes were fixed on the image, he could not possibly believe that she was changed to gold. But stealing another glance, there was the precious little figure, with a yellow tear-drop on its yellow cheek, and a look so piteous and tender that it seemed as if that very expression must needs soften the gold and make it flesh again.

This, however, could not be. So Midas had only to wring his hands, and to wish that he were the poorest man in the wide world, if the loss of all his wealth might bring back the faintest rose-colour to his dear child's face.



VI.—Quicksilver's Second Visit.

While Midas was in this tumult of despair, he suddenly beheld a stranger standing near the door. Midas bent down his head without

speaking; for he recognized the same figure which had appeared to him the day before in the treasure-room, and had bestowed on him this fatal gift of the Golden Touch. The stranger's countenance still wore a smile, which seemed to shed a yellow lustre all about the room, and gleamed on little Marygold's image, and on the other objects that had been changed by the touch of Midas.

"Well, friend Midas," said the stranger, "pray how do you succeed with the Golden Touch?"

Midas shook his head.

"I am very miserable," said he.

"Very miserable! Indeed!" exclaimed the stranger. "And how happens that? Have I not faithfully kept my promise with you? Have you not everything that your heart desired?"

"Gold is not everything," answered Midas; "and I have lost all that my heart really cared for."

"Ah! So you have made a discovery since yesterday?" observed the stranger. "Let us see, then. Which of these two things do you think is really worth the more—the gift of the Golden Touch, or one cup of clear cold water?"

"O blessed water!" exclaimed Midas; "it will never moisten my parched throat again!"

"The Golden Touch," continued the stranger, "or a crust of bread?"

"A piece of bread," answered Midas, "is worth all the gold on earth!"

"The Golden Touch," asked the stranger, "or your own little Marygold, warm, soft, and loving, as she was an hour ago?"

"O my child, my dear child!" cried poor Midas, wringing his hands. "I would not have given that one small dimple in her chin for the power of changing this whole big earth into a solid lump of gold!"

"You are wiser than you were, King Midas!" said the stranger, looking seriously at him. "Your own heart, I perceive, has not been entirely changed from flesh to gold. Were it so, your case would indeed be desperate. Tell me now, do you sincerely desire to rid yourself of this Golden Touch?"

"It is hateful to me!" replied Midas.

A fly settled on his nose, but immediately fell to the floor; for it, too, had become gold. Midas shuddered.

"Go, then," said the stranger, "and plunge into the river that glides past the bottom of your garden. Take likewise a vase of the same

water, and sprinkle it over any object that you may desire to change back again from gold into its former substance. If you do this in earnestness and sincerity, it may possibly repair the mischief which your avarice has occasioned."

King Midas bowed low, and when he lifted his head the lustrous stranger had vanished.

VII.--The Gift Recalled.

You will easily believe that Midas lost no time in snatching up a great earthen pitcher (but, alas, it was no longer earthen after he touched it) and hastening to the river-side. As he scampered along and forced his way through the shrubbery, it was positively marvellous to see how the foliage turned yellow behind him, as if the autumn had been there and nowhere else. On reaching the river's brink he plunged headlong in, without waiting so much as to pull off his shoes.

"Poof! poof! poof!" snorted King Midas, as his head emerged out of the water. "Well, this is really a refreshing bath, and I think it must have quite washed away the Golden Touch. And now for filling my pitcher!"

As he dipped the pitcher into the water, it gladdened his very heart to see it changed from gold into the same good, honest earthen vessel



which it had been before he touched it. He was conscious, also, of a change within himself. A cold, hard, and heavy weight seemed to have gone out of his bosom. No doubt his heart had been gradually losing its human substance, and changing itself into insensible metal; but it had now softened back again into flesh. Perceiving a violet that grew on the bank of the river, Midas touched it with his finger, and was overjoyed to find that the delicate flower retained its purple hue, instead of undergoing a yellow blight. The curse of the Golden Touch had therefore really been removed from him.

King Midas hastened back to the palace, and the first thing he did, as you need hardly be told, was to sprinkle the water by handfuls over the golden figure of little Marygold.

No sooner did it fall on her than you would have laughed to see how the rosy colour came back to the dear child's cheek, and how she began to sneeze and splutter, and how astonished she was to find herself dripping wet, and her father still throwing more water over her.

"Pray do not, dear father!" cried she. "See how you have wet my nice frock, which I put on only this morning!"

For Marygold did not know that she had been a little golden statue; nor could she re-

member anything that had happened since the moment when she ran with outstretched arms to comfort poor King Midas.

Her father did not think it necessary to tell his beloved child how very foolish he had been, but contented himself with showing how much wiser he had now grown. For this purpose he led little Marygold into the garden, where he sprinkled the remainder of the water over the rose-bushes, and with such good effect that the golden roses recovered their beautiful bloom.

There were two circumstances, however, which, as long as he lived, used to put King Midas in mind of the Golden Touch. One was, that the sands of the river sparkled like gold; the other, that little Marygold's hair had now a golden tinge, which he had never observed in it before she had been changed by the effect of his kiss.

Ever after that morning Midas hated the very sight of all other gold but the rich golden locks that glistened on his daughter's head.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.



THE VOYAGERS FROM TROY.

I.—The Tale of the Wooden Horse.

LONG ages ago there stood on the shore of Asia Minor a famous city named Troy, which was ruled by a king who bore the name of Priam. This king had a son called Paris, who at one time left his father's court to travel westward across the sea to the land of Greece.

While he was travelling in that country he visited the court of a king whose name was Menelaus, and who had a wife more beautiful than any woman who had ever lived. So beautiful, indeed, was this queen, that the young Paris not only lost his heart to her, but he also lost his sense of what was honourable and manly. For, having one day persuaded Helen to go out with him upon the sea in his ship, he quickly sailed away from her home, and carried her off to Troy.

Menelaus, who was in his royal palace, soon learned what had happened. He lost no time in making known the base deed of Paris to all the kings and princes of Greece. And they banded themselves together to sail for Troy, in order to rescue Helen and punish Paris for carrying off the queen.

For ten years they besieged the city, but its

walls were strong and its defenders brave. Many deeds of great valour were done in the plain by the sea on which the Greeks were encamped, and the story of the long contest has been handed down from age to age.

At last, however, the princes of Greece began to grow weary of the siege, which promised, indeed, to have no end ; and they met in council to form a plan for taking the city by craft. Then they gave orders for a great wooden horse with a hollow body to be set up ; and they hid within it a band of their bravest men fully armed and ready for battle.

When this had been done, the rest of the Greeks made for their ships, went on board, and hoisted sail as if they meant to return to their homes. They did indeed sail out of the harbour ; but when they reached a rocky island not far away, they anchored their ships out of sight of the watchers on the city walls, and awaited the result of their artful plan.

The Trojans were filled with joy when they saw the departure of their foes, and they flocked out of the city, whose walls had confined them for so long. With shouts of joy they ran to and fro among the deserted tents of the Greek soldiers, and before long they came to the place where stood the lofty wooden horse.



Helen on the Walls of Troy—Sir F. Leighton, P.R.A.



They gazed in wonder at the huge structure, and some among them said that it ought to be taken within the city as a trophy of war; but others were more doubtful, and advised its destruction; and one man among them cried out, "O foolish people, have you not yet learned how wily the Greeks can be? It is my belief that this monster contains within its hollow sides a number of our hated foes."

Then he threw his spear against the flank of the horse, and it stuck fast in one of the joints, while a rattling sound came from within. But, as if they were doomed to be misled and conquered, the crowd of Trojans paid no heed to the warning. Meanwhile some of them who had been searching among the tents had found a single Greek, whom they made captive and carried before their king.

The man was trembling in every limb, and his eyeballs rolled about in terror.

"Who and what are you?" they asked him; and when he had at last found his voice he said, "I am a Greek, and my name is Sinon. I am at your mercy. Do not keep me long in suspense."

But wishing to hear his story, the Trojans cheered him with kind words, and told him to take heart. After a few moments he spoke again, and said,—

"The Greeks some time ago determined to raise the siege and go back to their homes; and when they prayed to their gods for a safe return, it was told to them that only by the sacrifice of one of their number could this boon be gained.

"I was chosen, wretched man that I am, for the sacrifice, and put in bonds to await the appointed hour. But I broke from my chains, and having made my escape, lay in hiding until they sailed away."

Then the man ceased, and looked slyly round upon his hearers to mark the effect of his story upon them.

"But the wooden horse!" cried several in a breath. "Why was it made?"

"To gain the favour of the gods," was the ready answer; "and it was built of this huge size in order that it might not be dragged within your walls, and win for *you* the protection of the gods. For if it be taken within the city, the day will surely come when the Greeks will serve the Trojans."

Then there arose among the crowd a demand that the wooden horse should be at once taken inside the walls of the city; and without waiting to consider further, the work of making a wide breach in the wall was begun. Then ropes were fastened to the fore legs of the monster, and to

the sound of merry music it was dragged within the lofty wall. So great were the ardour and excitement of the people that none of them heard the clash of armour and the groans of warriors which came from within the wooden horse as it was dragged merrily along.

For the rest of the day the Trojan people gave themselves up to merriment; and when night came on they went to rest without setting guards upon the walls.

In the dead of night the Greeks came back. Once more they landed upon the shore, and a picked body of men was taken by the wily Sinon to the place where the wooden horse had been left. At once the door in its side was opened, and the Greek warriors, weary of the discomfort of their strange lodging, were glad enough to jump out upon the ground.

In a few moments the gates were opened and the Greeks flocked within the walls of the city, which for ten years they had tried in vain to take by force. Then there arose within the place the cries of alarm and the shouts of victory. Blood ran like water, and Troy became the prey of the victorious Greeks.



II.—The One-eyed Giant.

After the fall of Troy the Greek leaders set out for their homes. Among them was Menelaus, whose wife had now been restored to him. But those who set out from Troy did not all come safely to their homes again. For many of them wandered far before they reached the Grecian shore; and of the wanderers, the most famous was Ulysses, who had been one of the band of warriors within the wooden horse.

Ulysses and his men passed through many perils, and had many strange adventures; but perhaps the strangest of all was their meeting with the one-eyed giant. He was one of the wild and savage people known as the Cyclopæ, each of whom lived a lonely life in a cave by himself. When Ulysses reached the country of these strange people he chose from among his men twelve of the bravest. Then having bidden the rest to guard his ship, he went boldly forward with his companions towards the home of the giants.

By-and-by they came to the cave of one of these giants, and found within it pens full of lambs and kids, as well as pails of sweet milk and many piles of cheeses. The master of the cave was not at home, but the bold Ulysses made up his mind to await his return.

Night was falling fast when the one-eyed giant, who stood more than twenty feet high, came striding across the pastures to his home. Over his shoulders he carried a huge bundle of fagots, and before him ran a numerous company of sheep and goats.

As soon as he had driven these animals within the cave, he closed the entrance by means of a rock so huge that Ulysses and all his company could not hope to move it. Then he milked the goats, and set the milk in pails beside the others. When this had been done, he made a fire with his fagots of pine; and as the flames rose high and cast a bright light round the cave, he saw Ulysses and his men crouching down against the wall.

"Whence come ye?" roared the giant in an angry voice.

"We are Greeks, who have sailed hither from the city of Troy; and we come to seek a lodging with you."

"Where, then, is your ship?" asked the giant.

But the crafty leader of the Greeks, thinking that the Cyclops might seek out the vessel and dash it to pieces, said in reply,—

"We have no vessel, for that in which we sailed here was dashed to pieces on the rocks. We are shipwrecked men."

Thereupon the giant, without more ado, took two of the men, and having killed and devoured them, lay down to sleep.

Ulysses and his companions were filled with terror, but the leader would not allow his fear to unman him. He it was who had brought his followers into this strait, and by his craft and skill alone could they hope to be set free from their great peril.

Should he kill the giant as he lay there? He put this thought aside, for if the monster were lying dead how could they hope to get out of the cave, seeing that the way was barred by such a ponderous rock? No, they must wait at least until the next day, and take what chance might fall in their way.

Early on the following morning the giant awoke, and having made his breakfast of two more of the Greeks, he went out to his work. But before he left he took care to roll the rock against the entrance of the cave. The whole of that day the Greek leader spent in planning with his men how they might free themselves from their dreadful prison; and at last the plan was complete.

As evening was falling the giant came back, driving his sheep and goats and rams before him; and having feasted as before, he lay down

to sleep. But just at that moment Ulysses came forward with his wine-skin in his hand, and with pleasant words he offered some wine to the master of the cave.

The giant gulped down a long draught of the liquor, and being greatly pleased with the flavour of it asked for more, saying that he had never in his life tasted such a vintage. Ulysses gave him freely of the wine, and when it was all drunk he asked what the giant would give him in return.

“A favour, truly,” said the monster. “I will eat you last of all your band of warriors.”

Soon he slept the sleep of the drunken. Then Ulysses took a wooden stake which he had found in the cave, and having made the end red hot in the fire he thrust it into the giant’s one eye, so that the monster was now completely blinded. Up he sprang in a wild rage; and having rolled away the stone from the mouth of the cave, he sat at the entrance ready to seize the Greeks if they should try to make their escape.

Then Ulysses, the wise and crafty, tied each of his men under the body of one of the rams, which were very large and strong. And choosing the largest of them all for himself, he clung to its thick fleece on the underside.

When morning came, the rams ran out to the



Ulysses deriding Polyphemus.

field. And as they passed through the opening of the cave the giant felt their backs, thinking that the Greeks might try to escape upon these woolly steeds. But he did not dream of feeling *under* their bodies.

So the men made their escape, and when they were at a safe distance Ulysses unbound them. Then they ran with all speed to their ship, glad, indeed, for their own safety, but sad at heart for the loss of their comrades.

III.—The Bag of Winds.

Soon after Ulysses had overcome the one-eyed giant, he met with another strange adventure, of which we are now to learn.

As soon as he and his men were safe aboard their ship, the sails were loosed, and forth they went with a favouring gale. In due time they came to the island where lived Æolus, who was king of the winds. Here they were kindly received by that monarch, and he made them known to his twelve children, who had rule over the various winds of heaven.

For a month they stayed in this island, resting their weary limbs and sharing in the many delights of the place. Then, laden with rich presents, they went again to their ship.

Now the gift of Æolus to Ulysses was a bag

in which were enclosed all the winds but one. This was Zephyrus, the west wind, which was left free to play upon the sails of the vessel, and waft the mariners safely home across the sea to the land of Greece.

This bag was bound so closely with a shining band of silver that no breath of wind could escape, and for safety Ulysses hung it high up on the mast. His men did not know what the bag contained, but thought that the king of the winds had surely given their leader rich treasures of silver and gold.

For the space of nine days they sailed rapidly before the favouring western breeze, and on the tenth they came so near to Greece that they could see lights upon the shore. But Ulysses, tired with the labour of watching the helm, lay fast asleep on the deck of the vessel.

"A fortunate life has this leader of ours," said one of the men, in a low voice. "See what King Æolus has given him! The bag tied to the mast holds, no doubt, a fine store of precious metal." The hint was enough to stir the greed of the others. The bag was unfastened from the mast and the band of silver unloosed. Then with a mighty noise all the winds rushed out, and so strong was the east wind that in one short hour it drove the



vessel back across the sea to the harbour in the island of King Æolus.

The noise of the rushing winds awoke Ulysses, and at first he thought of casting himself into the sea, so great was his disappointment at the ruin of his hopes. Then he hid himself under the hatches for very shame, and when the ship came at last to the harbour he could scarcely be prevailed upon to go and ask Æolus for a second gift.

But at last he summoned up his courage, and, in the company of a herald, once more sought out the King of the Winds. He found that the monarch and his sons were feasting in their banquet-hall; and he humbly placed himself upon the threshold to await the pleasure of the king.

At length Æolus came to where he sat, and, full of surprise at the sight of him, called out,—

“Ulysses, why have you returned? Are you so soon tired of your home and country? We thought that our royal present had given you an easy voyage.”

Then the wanderer said sadly,—

“Unhappy that I am. As we drew near to the shores of our native land I slept the sleep of the weary, and my men unloosed the silver band which encircled the bag of the winds!”

"Wretched man!" cried the monarch, in a fury, "leave this island without loss of time; for surely a curse rests upon you and your companions, and it is the will of the gods that you should perish."

With sad hearts the mariners once more embarked and put out to the open sea. But now they were the sport of every wind that blew, and their hearts sank within them when they thought that they might never see their homes again.

How they were driven before the wind and came at last to land, but not their own, is a tale for another day.

IV.—The Prince of Troy.

In that last great struggle within the city of Troy one of the bravest who fought against the Greeks was the Trojan prince Æneas. Hearing the cries of alarm, he ran to the roof of his palace, whence he saw the flames rising to heaven, and heard the cries of the wounded in the streets below. Donning his armour, he rushed into the tumult at the head of a small band of Trojans, who were prepared to sell their lives as dearly as they could.

Before long they met a band of Greeks, who took them for friends, and did not find out their



mistake until it was too late. For the Trojan prince and his companions slew them all; and having put on their armour, they went forward in this disguise into the very heart of the burning city of Troy.

After much fighting they reached the palace of King Priam, where a fierce struggle was raging. The Greeks were battering at the gates and placing scaling-ladders against the walls; while the defenders showered darts, and even hurled the rafters and stones from the roof, upon them. Æneas and his friends manfully exerted themselves to help those within the palace, but all their bravest efforts were in vain.

Soon the Greeks had forced an entry into the palace. The aged King Priam bravely buckled on his armour and strove to help his friends and protectors. But he was dragged away by one of the Greeks, who plunged his sword into the monarch's breast.

Æneas had now no other thought than that of saving his father, his wife, and his little son, and he made his way as quickly as he could towards his own house. As he went he met Helen, whose fair face had been the cause of all the strife and trouble, and for a few moments he thought of ending her life then and there; but he stayed his hand, and passed onward to

seek out his aged father, Anchises. At first the old man was unwilling to escape, thinking that his life might fitly end with the fall of his native city and the death of his king. He bade Æneas fly with his own wife and son; as for himself, he preferred to die where he was.

But his son would not listen to this; and lifting his father upon his mighty shoulders, he went out, leading his little son by the hand, while his wife followed him closely. He carried his precious burden in safety through the burning streets, and quickly made for a quiet spot outside the city, without once looking behind.

When he stopped, to his great surprise he found that his wife was not near him. Leaving his father and son in the charge of a few friends, he returned to look for her; but all his searching was in vain. Sadly he turned away to rejoin his father, when he met one whom he thought to be his wife, and eagerly held out his arms to embrace her; but she seemed to elude him, and then he became aware that it was indeed no living woman which stood before him.

"Farewell, Æneas," said the shade. "It is not the will of Heaven that I should seek with you a new home in a strange land. Death has released me from the pain of serving the Greeks as a bond-woman. Far away across



the sea thou shalt find a safe refuge and found a new kingdom, whose throne not I but another shall share with thee." Then the shade seemed to melt away into the air, and Æneas was left alone.

With a sorrowful heart he returned to the place where he had left his father and his child. There he found with them a large number of friends who had fled from the city, ready to take him as their king, and to follow him wherever he might lead them. With these he lived during the winter months on the southern slopes of a lofty wooded mountain; and when spring had come, having built and fitted out a fleet of wooden ships, they left the sad shores of Troy to seek their fortunes in the far-off lands to the westward.

V.—*The Maiden Warrior.*

We cannot follow all the wanderings and adventures of the Trojan prince and his men, but we must tell how they came at last to the land where their children were to found in after years the famous city of Rome. Here, as we might expect, they were not allowed to make new homes for themselves without a mighty struggle with the people of that country.



*Through the thickest of the fight Camilla spurred her horse
(See page 47.)*

For a great army was gathered against them, led by a valiant prince named Turnus, and an equally brave young queen of a neighbouring tribe whose name was Camilla. This valiant maiden warrior, armed in burnished bronze, rode at the head of a troop of horsemen. By long practice she had become skilful in the use of the spear and the bow; and she had overcome her natural woman's weakness, so that she could now bear with patience all the toils of war. So swift of foot was she that it was often said by her people that she could outstrip the winds themselves.

Many stern fights were fought, and brave deeds were done on both sides. At one time the Trojans came before a city in which Camilla was resting, and the brave queen went out at the head of her troops to meet them. When the two forces had come within a spear's throw of each other, each sent forth a shower of arrows.

Then a stout warrior from each host rode hotly forward, and the two met together with a mighty crash. So great was the shock that the champion from the queen's army was hurled from his saddle like a stone from a catapult, flung through the air, and fell to the ground—dead. Thereupon the army of Camilla fled back to—

wards the city, with the foe in hot pursuit. But when they came close to the walls the flying warriors turned suddenly and checked their pursuers.

Soon the two armies were mingled, fighting man to man, and before long the field was strewn with dead or dying warriors. Through the thickest of the fight Camilla spurred her horse, now hurling a dart with truest aim, now bending her fatal bow and sending a swift arrow straight to its mark. Around her were four maidens, trained like herself to dare all the horrors of battle.

At last, after slaying many a brave Trojan, Camilla met a warrior who cried,—

“Prove your courage, proud queen, by ceasing to trust to the strength and swiftness of your charger. Meet me, hand to hand, upon the ground.”

Angry at the sneer, the brave queen leapt to the earth and moved forward to the combat, expecting her foe also to dismount. But he put spurs to his horse and scoured across the plain, proud of the trick which had placed the maiden warrior at a disadvantage.

But he had not counted upon her fleetness of foot. With the swiftness of the wind she ran after his charger and overtook it. Seizing the



reins, she tore him from the saddle and laid him low upon the ground—dead.

Once more the angry queen mounted and returned to the thickest of the fight. Among her foes she spied a warrior who was dressed in armour richly inlaid with gold, and wore a golden helmet which shone from afar in the rays of the setting sun. The queen made up her mind to win and wear this glittering armour, and she chased the warrior through the press without any regard to danger.

But as she leapt lightly over the heaps of slain she received in her shoulder a flying spear. Down she fell from her horse, and her maidens caught her in their arms. Desperately she plucked at the spear, but could not draw it from the wound. Her eyes lost their brightness, her cheeks their ruddy bloom. With failing breath she said to one of her maidens,—

“All around is growing dark, my sister. Ride quickly to Turnus and tell him to march out against the foe. And now, farewell.”

Even as she spoke, her head fell back, and her brave spirit departed.

VI.—*The Fight between Æneas and Turnus.*

Not long afterwards Turnus and Æneas met face to face in what proved to be the last stern



fight. For a while their troops had fought with varying fortune ; but when the two heroes at last moved forward to single combat the noise of battle ceased, and all fixed their eyes upon the champions.

Each hurled his spear from a distance, and then rushed to closer fight armed with sword and shield. The heavy strokes rang out across the silent plain, and for a while neither of the fighters seemed to have the advantage. Then Turnus was seen to raise himself to his utmost height and strike a fearful blow at the head of his enemy.

The hissing sword descended, but Æneas received it upon his shield. The sword broke off at the hilt, and now Turnus was at the mercy of his foe. Leaping backward, he escaped for a moment the deadly blows of Æneas, and then with fleet foot ran round and round the open space followed closely by his foe. Five times they made the circuit, and the watchers held their breath. Then Turnus called for a spear to be brought to him. But Æneas sternly forbade any one to enter the space between the watching forces.

Now it happened that there stood in the centre of the field the stump of a wild olive tree, in which the spear of Æneas had caught when

he hurled it at Turnus in the beginning of the fight. And the Trojan prince as he passed it tried to wrench it out, wishing to use it, and so end the combat once for all. But it was held fast by the twining roots, and he could not at first dislodge it.

Seeing him so engaged, a friend of Turnus ran forward and gave a sword to the panting prince. Then with a desperate wrench Æneas at last was able to tear away the spear; and the two chiefs once more faced each other, ready again for the fight.

Now, as they stood eager for battle, an owl swooped silently down towards them, and flapping her velvet wings, perched upon the shield of Turnus. At this his eyes grew round with terror.

"What means this delay?" cried his enemy. "Do you decline the trial? Are you better at running than at fighting?"

"Insulting foe!" replied the other boldly. Then dropping his sword, he raised from the earth a ponderous stone and hurled it at his enemy. But the great stone fell short, and Turnus stood for one unguarded moment as if dazed. Then hissing through the air came the spear of Æneas and fixed itself in his thigh.

Down fell Turnus to the ground, and Æneas rushed upon him. With an angry stroke he



ended the life of his foe, and proudly raised his head with the light of victory upon his face.

THOR THE THUNDERER.

I.—The Recovery of the Hammer.

THE old Norse Vikings, of whom we read in early history, used to say that the thunder was the noise made by the chariot wheels of Thor. This maker of the thunder, they said, was the strongest of gods and men. He lived in a lofty mansion with more than five hundred rooms, which he had built in Asgard, the city of the gods and heroes.

He rode along the sky in a chariot drawn by a pair of he-goats; and he was the owner of three things, without which he would scarcely have been worthy of the name of a god. The first of these was a huge hammer or mallet, named Mjolnir, the heavy weight of which all who had ever angered Thor knew to their cost. And not the least wonderful thing about this hammer was the fact that when Thor had thrown it at any mark, it always came back again to his strong right hand.

The second possession which Thor found very useful was a belt or girdle, which, when buckled round him, gave him double strength. And the third was a pair of iron gloves, without which he could not grasp and hurl his wonderful hammer. We can well believe that he





Freya—Sir E. Burne-Jones.

(Photographs by Hollyer.)

took the greatest care of these three precious gifts of the gods.

For at one time he had been unfortunate enough to lose his hammer. It was found by some one, and taken to his enemy, Thrym the giant, who was well enough pleased to think that he could by any means weaken his foe the Thunderer. He hid the hammer under a pile of lofty rugged rocks in the land of the giants, and then waited to see what Thor would do.

The Thunderer began by sending a herald to Giant-land to find out what reward would be asked for the return of the hammer to its owner. The messenger came back with the answer: "Let the dwellers in Asgard send Freya, the goddess of beauty, to become the wife of Thrym and the Queen of Giant-land. Then shall the hammer of the Thunderer be restored."

The message was at once carried to Freya, the queen of love and beauty, who had, at that moment, returned from a field of battle with a band of heroes who had fallen in the fight. She was about to alight from her chariot, which was drawn by two huge cats, when the message was delivered to her.

At first she stood dumb with scorn and loathing. "The bride of Thrym!" she cried in anger, after a few moments—"the wife of the

enemy of Odin and all mankind! Never! Not even to regain the hammer of Thor."

Then the messenger returned at once to the Thunderer.

For a while Thor did not know what to do, but Loki the crafty one came to him with a plan. He offered to go with Thor to Giant-land, if the Thunderer would disguise himself as Freya. So the two set out in the chariot of Thor without any further delay.

Before long they arrived in Giant-land, and sought out the dwelling-place of Thrym, a hall of glittering ice, lofty and sparkling, but cold and cheerless to the dwellers in Asgard.

At once they were admitted, and the giant received them with courtesy. In a few moments he had placed a plenteous meal before the travellers, and they prepared to do full justice to his hospitality. But the eyes of Thrym opened wide with wonder as he saw his promised bride eat an ox as well as six salmon of great size, and other smaller meats not worthy of mention, and drink three vats of sparkling wine!

Turning aside he said to Loki in a whisper, "The goddess is a hearty eater." "Small wonder," said the crafty one; "she has not rested from travel for eight days and nights. We made no pause on our way hither, so keen was



the desire of the bride to look upon the face of her future lord."

This answer seemed to satisfy Thrym, for he came forward and gently raised the veil which had up to that moment concealed the features of his bride. But he dropped it hastily. "Why do the bride's eyes shine with so fierce a light?" he asked. "Because she is eager to see your face," said Loki. "You must have more patience. Lay the hammer of Thor on the ground at her feet as a marriage offering, and all will be well."

The giant was so eager to see the face of Freya, whose beauty was well known to gods and giants, that even this crafty request of Loki did not raise any suspicion in his mind. So Mjolnir was brought from its hiding-place and laid in the lap of the bride.

Then a strong, sinewy hand was stretched out from beneath the veil of the pretended goddess, and in a very short time there was an end of Thrym and all his household.

II.—The Thunderer meets his Match.

But Thor did not always prosper in his expeditions against the giants, as the following story will prove.

One day he set out on a journey to Giant-



Thor—Sir E. Burne-Jones.
(*Photograph by Hollyer.*)

land, and thinking that once more he might have need of craft he took Loki with him. The two travelled again in the chariot of Thor, which was drawn by two powerful he-goats, and adorned at the end of the pole with a dragon's head.

They rode onward at a great pace, now scaling the lofty mountains, now passing swiftly through the air over the deep valleys. Night came on, and seeing a light in a peasant's cottage up a steep hillside, Thor drove his chariot to the door, alighted, and asked for supper.

The aged peasant who lived in the house was all in a flutter when he saw the strangers, and he called his son Thialfi and his daughter Roska to attend to them. "What have you for supper?" asked Loki; and the peasant maiden said, in a trembling voice, "Milk, and cheese of my own making."

Without a word Thor strode from the cottage, slew his goats, brought the carcasses within, flayed them, and put the flesh into the boiling pot. When the meal was ready he sat down with his fellow-traveller, and invited the peasant and his two children to supper.

They seated themselves, wondering greatly who the strangers might be. Now before they began to eat Thor ordered them to throw the



bones, when picked clean, into the goats' skins, which were spread out before the fire. But Thialfi, wishing to suck the marrow from one of the bones, broke it with his knife.

The strangers spent the night in the peasant's hut, but rose from their couch as soon as the day had dawned. Thor then stepped before the fire, and raising his hammer in his hand he held it over the outstretched goat-skins. At once the animals sprang to life again and darted for the door.

"One of them limps," said Thor, with a frown. "Yes," said Loki: "its hind leg is injured; the bone has been broken." The face of Thor grew black with anger, and he gripped the shaft of Mjolnir until his knuckles grew as white as milk. The trembling peasant, his son, and his daughter fell at once upon their knees to ask the pardon of their terrible guest.

This caused the heart of the Thunderer to grow milder. His hammer dropped and his fierce countenance lightened. "Your son and daughter must serve me henceforth, peasant," he said; and the brother and sister followed him out to his chariot, to which Loki had meanwhile harnessed the goats.

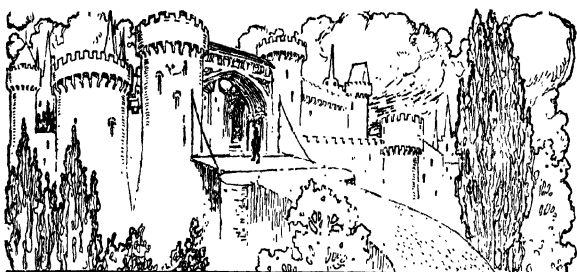
But when he reached the open air Thor suddenly asked the peasant to take charge of the

goats until he returned, and the party of four set out on foot eastward across the mountains. Thialfi and Roska between them carried the wallet of the Thunderer, which served upon occasion as a cooking-pot.

They went through wood and dale, over mountain and meadow, until they came at last to the margin of a wide sea. Over this great water they passed, and then made their way towards the borders of an extensive forest. Through this they wandered all day in an aimless fashion; and whenever they wanted food Thialfi, who was a very swift runner, chased a hart or some other animal, and Roska cooked its flesh in the wallet of Thor.

As night was falling they came to a large building with a wide portal, and here they decided to take their rest. In the dead of the night they were disturbed by what they thought must be an earthquake, so fearfully did the hall shake and sway. At once Thor rose to his feet, roused his companions, and begged them to seek with him a place of greater security.

To the right of the great hall they found a smaller room, into which Thor's companions crept with fear and trembling. But the Thunderer, armed with his hammer, placed himself near the doorway of this small chamber,



*The Apples
of Iduna.
—J. W. D.
Penrose.*



*When the Norse heroes felt the approach of old age, they partook of the
apples of the goddess Iduna, and so renewed their youth.*

ready to fight with any who might venture to disturb the party.

Throughout the rest of the night they heard a terrible groaning, which sounded like a giant in great trouble and distress. Day dawned at last, and shouldering his hammer Thor stepped out of the hall into the forest glade.

Not far away he saw a giant of immense bulk lying in a clearing. At first he thought that the monster was dead, but as he drew nearer to him he heard him breathing heavily, and at intervals groaning as if he were in great pain.

Thor now knew whence the groaning had come which had filled even his stout heart with fear during the watches of the night. Now that he knew the cause of the noise he felt no touch of terror, and he began to prepare himself for a desperate struggle.

Girding on his belt of bravery, which he had carried for the moment over his arm, he at once felt his strength grow double. At that moment the giant awoke, and rolled his dreadful eyes around; and for once, in spite of his magic girdle and his mallet, Thor felt afraid. Instead of dealing the blow which he had contemplated, he mildly asked the giant by what name he was known among gods and men.

"My name!" said the bulky one, doing his

best not to roar. "My name is Skrymir. As for you, I know you to be Thor, the so-called Thunderer." Here he laughed, and the forest rang; then he asked sharply, "What have you done with my glove? Ah! here it is."

Then he stretched out his hand and took up the glove. And Thor, in wondering surprise, saw that the glove was none other than the hall in which he and his companions had spent the first part of the previous night, while the small chamber to which they had retreated in affright was the separate compartment for the giant's thumb!

"Now," cried the giant, "let us eat together. Have you any food?" "Yes, indeed," said Thor, and he called upon Thialfi, who stood near, to bring the wallet. The giant then put all the meat into his own wallet, and throwing it across his back, led the way through the forest.

The others followed at a short distance. It was a dense forest cumbered with thick underwood, and the party found it no small convenience to have the way cleared for them by the mighty feet and form of Skrymir.

At dusk they came to a clearing among some lofty oak trees. "Take the wallet," cried the giant, throwing it down upon the ground, "and

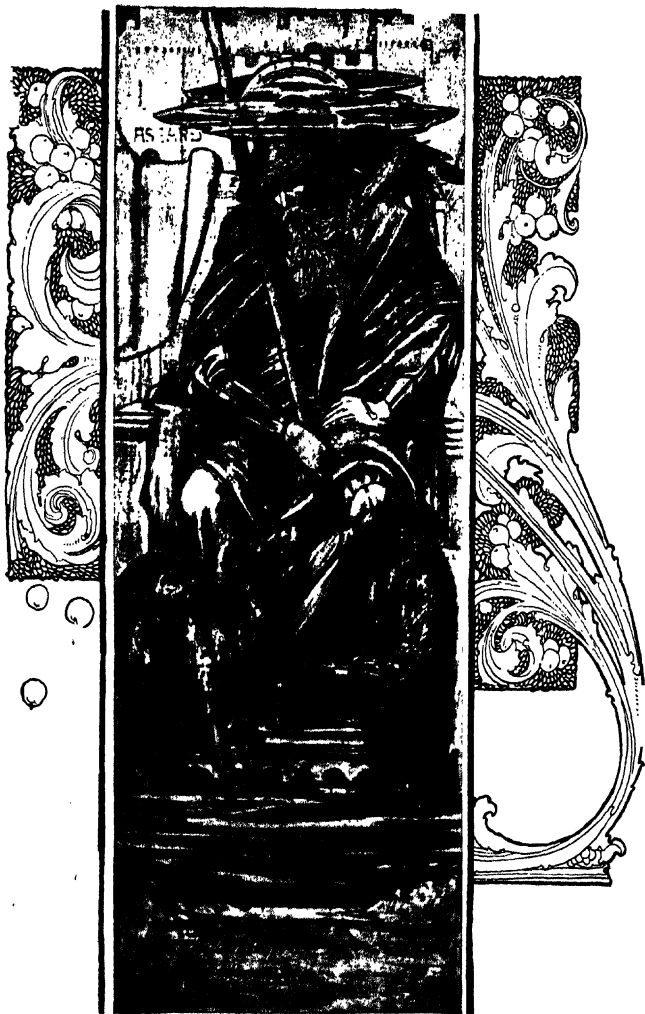
make ready the supper while I sleep." Then he went down upon all fours and crept within the shade of the oak trees.

The others picked up the huge wallet, and Thor tried to unloose the cords with which it was tied at the mouth. He was quite unable to unravel the knots, and the others tried to help him, but with no success. Thereupon Thor grew very angry, and he took his hammer in both hands. Raising it aloft he flung it at the head of the giant, who was snoring loudly.

Skrymir at once awoke, and sleepily asked whether an oak leaf had fallen upon his head. "Aren't you going to lie down and sleep?" he said to the others in a drowsy tone.

"Yes, indeed," said Thor, seeing his advantage. "We are just going to lie down under one of these wide-spreading oaks." Then they went apart and lay down. But Thor did not sleep, and as soon as he knew by the heavy snoring that the giant was once more soundly sleeping, he rose to his feet and grasped his hammer until the knuckle-bones on his right hand grew as white as snow.

Raising the hammer aloft he flung it with such force that it sank up to the handle in the giant's head; and then, as was its custom, it returned to the hand of the Thunderer.



Odin—Sir E. Burne-Jones.
(*Photograph by Hollyer.*)



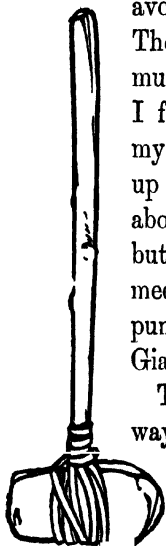
Skrymir awoke and turned lazily round. "Whatever has happened?" he said sleepily. "Surely an acorn fell a moment ago upon my forehead. Are you asleep, you whom men call the Thunderer?"

"No; I am awake," said Thor, as pleasantly as he could. "But it is only midnight, and there is time for us to sleep some time longer."

A little before daybreak Thor crept forward and found that Skrymir was fast asleep once more. So he launched his hammer again, this time with such violence that it forced its way up to the shaft into the giant's cheek.

Skrymir rose to a sitting posture, carefully avoiding the top branches of the lofty oaks. Then he rubbed his cheek, and said, "There must be many birds in this tree. I am sure I felt some moss fall from the branches upon my face. Thor! Ho! ho! It is time to be up and away. I have heard you whispering about what you call my great dimensions; but if you come again to Giant-land, you may meet with others beside whom I shall seem a puny child. Good-bye! Come no more to Giant-land."

Then he picked up his wallet, and crashed his way through the trees.



THE STORY OF ALADDIN; OR, THE WONDERFUL LAMP.

I.—The Idle Boy.

IN one of the largest and richest cities of China there once lived a poor tailor, named Mustapha. It was only with the greatest difficulty that, by his daily labour, he was able to maintain himself, his wife, and his son.

His son, who was called Aladdin, was a very careless and idle boy. He was accustomed to go out early in the morning and stay out all day, playing in the streets with idle children of his own age.

When he was old enough to learn a trade his father took him into his own shop, and taught him how to use the needle; but no sooner was his back turned than the lad was gone for that day. Mustapha chastised him, but to no purpose, and, to his great grief, was finally forced to abandon him to his idleness. Indeed, he was so much troubled about him that he fell sick and died in a few months.

Aladdin now gave himself entirely over to his idle habits, and was never out of the company of his worthless associates. This course he followed till he was fifteen years old.



As he was one day playing in the street, a stranger passing by stood to observe him.

This stranger was a sorcerer, known in the city as the African magician, as he had been but two days arrived from Africa, his native country.

The African magician, seeing in Aladdin's face something which assured him that he was a fit boy for his secret purpose, asked his name and history of some of his companions. When he had learnt all that he desired to know, he went up to him, and taking him aside from his comrades said, "Child, was not your father called Mustapha the tailor?" "Yes, sir," answered the boy, "but he has been dead a long time."



At these words the African magician threw his arms about Aladdin's neck, and kissed him several times with tears in his eyes, saying, "I am your uncle. Your worthy father was my own brother. I knew you at first sight, you resemble him so closely."

Then he gave Aladdin a handful of small money, saying, "Go, my son, to your mother, give my love to her, and tell her that I will visit her to-morrow in order to see the place where my good brother lived so long, and ended his days."

Aladdin ran home. "Mother," said he, "have I an uncle?" "No, child," replied his mother, "you have no uncle." "I am just now come from a man who says he is my uncle and my father's brother," said the boy. "He cried and kissed me when I told him my father was dead, and gave me money, sending his love to you, and promising to come and pay you a visit." "Indeed, child," replied the mother, "your father had no brother, nor have you an uncle on your mother's side."

The next day the magician found Aladdin playing in another part of the town, put two pieces of gold into his hand, and said to him, "Carry this, my child, to your mother. Tell her that I will come and see her to-night, and bid her get us something for supper; but first show me the house where you live."

Aladdin showed the African magician the house, and carried the two pieces of gold to his mother, who went out and bought provisions. She borrowed various pots and pans from her neighbours, and spent the whole day in preparing the supper; and at night, when it was ready, she said to her son, "Perhaps the stranger knows not how to find our house; go out and conduct him hither if you meet with him."

II.—The African Magician.

Aladdin was just ready to go when the magician came in, loaded with wine and all sorts of fruits. After he had given what he brought into Aladdin's hands, he saluted the boy's mother, and desired her to show him the place where his brother Mustapha used to sit on the sofa; and when she had done so, he fell down and kissed it several times, crying out, with tears in his eyes,—

“My poor brother! How unhappy am I not to have come soon enough to give you one last embrace.” Aladdin's mother desired him to sit down in the same place, but he declined. “No,” said he, “I will not do that; but give me leave to sit opposite to it, that, although I see not the master of a family so dear to me, I may at least behold the place where he used to sit.”

The magician then made choice of a place, and sat down. “My good sister,” said he, “do not be surprised because you have never seen me before. I have been forty years absent from this country, and during that time have travelled into the Indies, Persia, Arabia, Syria, and Egypt, and afterwards into Africa, where I took up my permanent abode.

"At last I was desirous to see my native country again, and to embrace my dear brother, so I made the necessary preparations, and set out. Nothing ever afflicted me so much as the sad news of my brother's death. But it is a comfort for me to find, as it were, my brother in his son."

The magician, perceiving that the widow wept, changed the conversation, and turning towards Aladdin, asked him, "What business do you follow, my boy?"

At this question the youth hung down his head, and was not a little abashed when his mother answered, "Aladdin is an idle fellow. His father strove to teach him his trade, but could not succeed; and since his death the boy does nothing but idle away his time in the streets, as you saw him, and I despair of his ever coming to any good. For my own part, I am now resolved to turn him out of doors."

After these words Aladdin's mother burst into tears, and the magician said, "This is not well, nephew; you must think of helping yourself. There are many sorts of trades; perhaps you do not like your father's, and would prefer another. I will try to help you. I will take a shop for you, and furnish it with all sorts of





Aladdin discovers the Lamp. (See page 79.)

fine stuffs and linens ; then with the money you make by selling them you can lay in fresh goods, and live in an honourable way. Tell me freely what you think ; you shall always find me ready to keep my word."

This plan just suited Aladdin. He told the magician that he was much obliged for his kind offer. "Well, then," said the magician, "I will take you with me to-morrow, clothe you handsomely, and afterwards we will open a shop."

III.—The Ring in the Stone.

The widow no longer doubted that the magician was her husband's brother. She thanked him for his good intentions, and after supper the man took his leave.

He came again the next day, and took Aladdin with him to a clothier. There he bade his nephew choose what garments he liked.

When the lad found himself handsomely dressed, he returned thanks to his uncle, who said, "As you are soon to be a merchant, it is proper you should frequent these shops." He then showed him the largest and finest mosques, took him to the khans, or inns, where the merchants and travellers lodged, and afterwards to the sultan's palace ; and at last he brought him to his own khan, where,

meeting with some merchants he knew, he gave them a banquet in order to bring them and his nephew together.

This entertainment lasted till night, when Aladdin would have taken leave of his uncle to go home. The magician, however, would not let him go by himself, but conducted him to his mother, who was transported with joy, and bestowed a thousand blessings on her brother-in-law.

Early the next morning the magician called again for Aladdin. He then led him out at one of the gates of the city to some magnificent palaces, which were surrounded by beautiful gardens. At each building he came to he asked Aladdin if he did not think it splendid; and the youth was always ready to answer, "This is a finer house, uncle, than any we have yet seen."

By this plan the cunning magician led Aladdin some way into the country; and as he meant to carry him still further, he took an opportunity to sit down in one of the gardens, on the brink of a fountain of clear water, pretending to be very tired. "Come, nephew," said he, "you must be weary; let us rest ourselves." •

The magician next pulled from his girdle a handkerchief filled with cakes and fruit; and

while they were eating these dainties he begged his nephew to forsake bad company. "For," said he, "you will soon be at man's estate."

When they had eaten as much as they desired, they pursued their walk through gardens and beyond. At last they arrived between two mountains divided by a narrow valley. "We will go no further now," said the magician to Aladdin; "I will show you here some extraordinary things. While I strike a light gather up all the loose dry sticks you can see, and we shall use them to kindle a fire."

Aladdin soon collected a great heap of sticks. The magician presently set them on fire, and threw some incense amongst them, pronouncing several magical words, the meaning of which Aladdin did not understand.

The magician had scarcely done so when the earth opened just before him, and discovered a stone with a brass ring fixed in it. Aladdin was so frightened that he would have run away; but the magician caught hold of him, and gave him such a box on the ear that he knocked him down.

Aladdin got up trembling, and said to the magician, "What have I done, uncle, to be treated in this severe manner?" "I occupy the place of your father," answered the magi-

cian, "and you ought to make no reply to my chastisement. But, child," added he, softening, "do not be afraid ; for I shall not ask anything of you but that you obey me implicitly, if you would reap the advantages which I intend you to obtain.

"Know, then, that under this stone there is hidden a treasure which is destined to be yours, and which will make you richer than the greatest monarch in the world. No person but yourself is permitted to lift this stone, or enter the cave ; so you must do what I command."

IV.—The Underground Palace.

Aladdin was amazed at all he saw and heard, and rising, said, "Well, uncle, what is to be done? I am ready to obey you in all things." "Take hold of the ring," said the other, "and lift up that stone." "Indeed, uncle," replied Aladdin, "I am not strong enough." "If I help you, we shall not be able to do anything," answered the magician. "Take hold of the ring and lift up the stone." Aladdin did as the magician bade him, raised the stone with ease, and laid it on one side.

When the stone was pulled up, there appeared a short staircase leading downwards to a door. "Descend those steps, my son," said the magi-



The Magician set them on fire. (See page 75.)

cian, "and open that door. It will lead you into a palace, divided into three great halls. In each of these halls you will see four large brass cisterns placed on each side, full of gold and silver; but take care you do not meddle with the contents of any of them.

"Before you enter the first hall be sure to tuck up your robe, and then pass through it and the second into the third. Above all things, do not touch the walls, nor even allow your clothes to do so; for if you do, you will die instantly. At the end of the third hall you will find a door which opens into a garden planted with fine fruit trees. Walk across the garden to a terrace, where you will see a niche before you, and in that niche a lighted lamp.

"Take down the lamp and put out the light. When you have thrown away the wick and poured out the liquid, put the lamp in your waistband and bring it to me. Do not be afraid that the liquid will spoil your clothes, for it is not oil, and the lamp will be quite dry as soon as it is thrown out."

The magician then drew a ring from his finger, and put it on one of Aladdin's, saying, "It is a talisman against all evil, so long as you obey me. Go, therefore, boldly, and we shall both be rich all our lives."

Aladdin descended the steps and found the three halls. He went through them with care, took down the lamp from the niche, and having thrown out the wick and the liquid, put it into his waistband.

But as he came down from the terrace he stopped to observe the trees, which were loaded with extraordinary fruit of various colours. The white were pearls; the clear and transparent, diamonds; the red, rubies; the green, emeralds; the blue, turquoises; the purple, amethysts; and the yellow, opals.

Aladdin, ignorant of their value, would have preferred figs or grapes or pomegranates; but he resolved to gather some of every sort. So he thrust into the bosom of his robe as many jewels as it would hold.

The youth now returned to the mouth of the cave, where the magician awaited him. As soon as Aladdin saw him he cried, "Pray, uncle, help me out." "Give me the lamp first," replied the magician. "Indeed, uncle," answered Aladdin, "I cannot now, but I will as soon as I get out of this."

The African magician was determined that he would have the lamp before he would help him up; but Aladdin refused to give it to him till he was out of the cave.

The man flew into a passion, threw a little of his incense into the fire, and pronounced two magical words. Then the stone which had closed the hole moved once more into its place, shutting Aladdin into the cave.

V.—The Jinn.

Aladdin now knew that the magician was no uncle of his, but one who designed him evil. The truth was that the man had learnt from his magic books the secret and the value of the wonderful lamp, and because of this had made his journey to China. His art had also told him that he must receive it as a gift from the hands of another person. Hence he had employed young Aladdin for his own purpose. When he now found that his attempt had failed, he set out on his return to Africa.

Meanwhile Aladdin called out lustily to the magician to tell him he was ready to give him the lamp, but all in vain. He descended to the bottom of the steps, to return to the palace, but found that the door was now shut.

He then sat down on the steps without any hopes of ever seeing the light again. In this great emergency he clasped his hands together in agony of mind, and in doing so he happened to rub the ring which the magician had put on



"Give me the lamp," said the Magician.

(See page 79.)

his finger. Immediately a jinn of frightful aspect appeared and said,—

“What dost thou wish? I am ready to obey thee. I serve him who possesses the ring—I, and the other slaves of that ring.”

At another time Aladdin would have been frightened at the sight of the jinn, but the danger he was in gave him courage to answer, “Whoever thou art, deliver me from this place.”

He had no sooner spoken these words than he found himself on the very spot where the magician had last left him, and no sign of cave or opening or disturbance of the earth was to be seen. With a heart full of thankfulness, he made the best of his way home.

When he got within his mother's door, the joy of seeing her and his weakness for want of food made him so faint that he remained for a long time as if he were dead. As soon as he recovered, he told his mother all that had happened to him, and they were both very loud in their complaints against the cruel magician.

Aladdin slept very soundly till late the next morning. As soon as he awoke he arose, dressed himself, and then asked his mother for his breakfast. “Alas, child,” she said in a

sad tone, "I have not a bit of bread to give you. But I have a little cotton which I have spun; I will go and sell it, and buy bread."

"Mother," replied Aladdin, "keep your cotton for another time, and give me the lamp I brought home with me yesterday. I will go and sell it, and the money I shall get for it will serve both for breakfast and dinner, and perhaps supper too."

Aladdin's mother took down the lamp from a shelf and said to her son, "Here it is, but it is very dirty; if it were a little cleaner, I believe it would bring something more." She took some sand and water to clean it, but had no sooner begun to rub it than in an instant a hideous jinn appeared before her, and said to her in a voice of thunder,—

"What dost thou wish? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those who have that lamp in their hands—I, and the other slaves of the lamp."

Aladdin's mother swooned away with fear; but Aladdin snatched the lamp out of her hand, and said boldly, "I am hungry; bring me something to eat."

The jinn vanished, and soon returned with a tray holding twelve silver dishes full of the most delicious viands, six large cakes, two flagons



of wine, and two silver cups. All these he placed upon a carpet and disappeared.

Meanwhile Aladdin had fetched some water and sprinkled it on his mother's face, and it was not long before she came to herself. "Mother," said Aladdin, "be not afraid; get up and eat."

VI.—*The Slave of the Lamp.*

"Child," said Aladdin's mother, "to whom are we obliged for this?" "It is no matter, mother," said Aladdin; "let us sit down and eat. When we have finished our meal, I will tell you."

The mother and son sat at breakfast till it was dinner-time, and then they thought it would be best to take the two meals together; yet after this they found they should have enough left for supper, and two meals for the next day.

Then Aladdin's mother went and sat down by her son on the sofa, saying, "I hope now that you will tell me what passed between the jinn and you." This he did without more delay.

She was now in great amazement, and said, "But, son, what have we to do with jinns? How came that vile jinn to speak to me and not to you?" "Mother," answered Aladdin, "the jinn you saw is not the one who appeared

to me, for he called himself the slave of the ring; and the one you saw called himself the slave of the lamp."

"What!" cried the mother, "was your lamp, then, the cause of the trouble? Ah, my son, take it out of my sight. I had rather you would sell it than touch it again; and you must part also with the ring, nor have anything more to do with jinns."

"With your leave, mother," replied Aladdin, "I shall now take care how I sell a lamp which may be so useful. That false magician would not have come so far to secure it if he had not known its value. Let us make use of it without exciting the jealousy of our neighbours."

"But I will take it out of your sight, and put it where I can find it when I want it. The ring I cannot part with, for without that you had never seen me again; therefore I hope you will give me leave to wear it always on my finger." Aladdin's mother replied that he might do as he pleased in that matter.

By the next night the two had eaten all the provisions the jinn had brought; and the following day Aladdin, putting one of the silver dishes under his vest, went out early to sell it. Meeting a dealer, he asked him if he would buy it. The cunning dealer examined it, and



as soon as he found that it was good silver, asked Aladdin how much he desired for it.

Aladdin told him he would trust to his judgment and honour. The dealer at once took a piece of gold out of his purse and gave it to him, though it was only the sixtieth part of the real value of the plate.

With this money mother and son purchased provisions enough to last them some time. After this manner they lived, till Aladdin had sold the twelve dishes singly to the dealer for the same sum of money ; for this man, after the first time, dared not offer him less, for fear of losing so good a bargain. For the tray the dealer laid down ten pieces of gold, with which Aladdin was very well satisfied.

When all the money was spent, Aladdin had recourse again to the lamp. He took it in his hands, rubbed it, and the jinn immediately appeared, and said, "What dost thou wish? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all those who have that lamp in their hands—I, and the other slaves of the lamp." "Bring me something to eat," Aladdin said. The jinn disappeared, and presently returned with a tray and dishes as before, set them down, and vanished.

When the food was eaten, Aladdin took one

of the dishes and went to look for his dealer ; but a goldsmith called to him, and said, " My lad, I imagine that you have something to sell to the dealer whom I often see you visit ; but perhaps you do not know that he is a great rogue. I will give you the full worth of what you have to sell."

Aladdin at once pulled his plate from under his vest and showed it to the goldsmith, who at a single glance saw that it was made of the finest silver, and asked him if he had sold such as that to the dealer. Then Aladdin told him that he had sold him twelve of the same kind for a piece of gold each.

" What a villain !" cried the goldsmith. Then he took a pair of scales, weighed the dish, and offered to pay down immediately sixty pieces of gold for it.

Aladdin thanked him for his fair dealing, and never afterwards went to any other merchant.

VII.—The Sultan's Daughter.

Though Aladdin and his mother had an inexhaustible treasure in their lamp, yet they lived with the same frugality as before. Aladdin frequented the shops of the principal merchants, and oftentimes joining in their conversation, acquired a knowledge of the world, and a desire

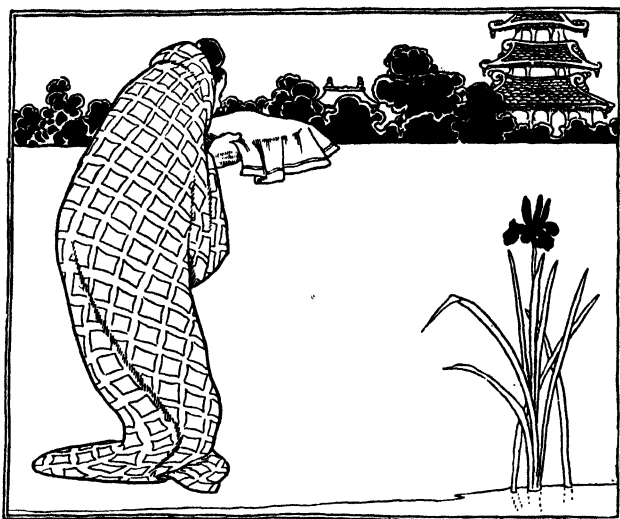
to improve himself. He also came to know that the fruits which he had gathered when he took the lamp were stones of great value ; but he had the prudence not to mention this to any one.

One day, as he was walking about the town, he heard an order proclaimed commanding the people to keep within doors while the Sultan's daughter went to the bazaar and returned. This filled Aladdin with eager desire to see the Princess's face, and he placed himself behind the door of one of the booths.

Soon the Princess came. She was attended by a great crowd of ladies and slaves, who walked on each side and behind her. When she came within three or four paces of the door behind which Aladdin was hidden, she took off her veil. The youth had then a full view of her face.

The Princess was a noted beauty. Her eyes were large, lively, and sparkling ; her smile bewitching ; her nose faultless ; her mouth small ; her lips as red as rubies. It is not therefore surprising that Aladdin was quite dazzled and enchanted at the sight of her.

After the Princess had passed by, Aladdin went home. His mother perceived him to be more thoughtful than usual, and asked if he



Aladdin's mother set out for the Sultan's palace.

(See page 90.)

was ill. He at once told his mother all his adventure, and said, "I love the Princess more than I can express, and will ask her in marriage of the Sultan."

Aladdin's mother laughed aloud. "Alas, child," said she, "what are you thinking of? You must be mad to talk thus."

"I assure you, mother," replied Aladdin, "that I am not mad. I foresaw that you would mock me, but I am resolved to demand the Princess in marriage of the Sultan, her father; nor do I despair of success. I have

the slaves of the lamp and of the ring to help me.

“And I have another secret to tell you. Those fruits, which I got from the trees in the garden, are jewels fit for the greatest monarch; and I am sure that the offer of them will secure the favour of the Sultan. You have a fine large porcelain dish to hold them. Fetch it, and let us see how they will look when placed in it.”

Aladdin's mother brought the china dish, and he took out the jewels and placed them in order. Then their brightness so dazzled the eyes of both mother and son, that they were astonished beyond measure.

The good woman, emboldened by the sight of these rich jewels, promised to go early on the next morning to the palace of the Sultan. Aladdin rose before daybreak, and having eagerly awakened his mother, pressed her to go to the Sultan's palace before the Grand Vizier and the great officers of state went in to take their seats in the Sultan's divan.

Aladdin's mother then took the china dish, wrapped it in two fine damask kerchiefs, and set out for the Sultan's palace. When she came to the gates she found that the Grand Vizier and the lords of the court had just gone in; but

although the crowd of people was great, she got into the divan—a spacious hall, the entrance to which was very magnificent. She placed herself just before the Sultan, Grand Vizier, and the great lords, who sat in council, on his right and left hand. Several causes were called, according to their order, pleaded and adjudged. Then the Sultan returned to his own apartment.

Aladdin's mother, seeing the Sultan retire, and all the people depart, resolved to go home; and on her arrival she said to Aladdin,—

“Son, I have seen the Sultan, and am very well persuaded he has seen me too, for I placed myself just before him; but he was so much taken up with those who attended on all sides of him that I pitied him, and wondered at his patience. At last he rose up suddenly and went away; at which I was well pleased, for indeed I began to lose all patience myself. But there is no harm done. I will go again to-morrow; perhaps the Sultan may not be so busy.”

The next morning she went to the palace as early as on the day before, but when she came there she found the gates of the divan shut. She went six times afterwards, and



though she always placed herself directly before the Sultan, she had as little success as on the first morning.

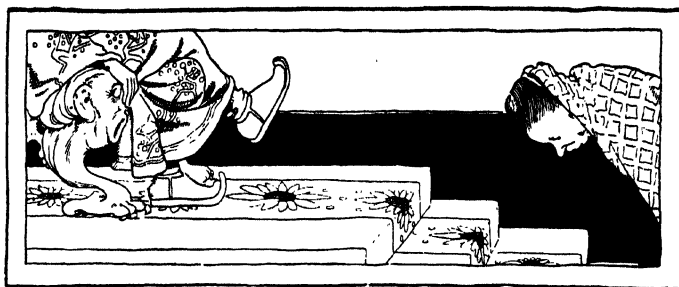
On the sixth day, however, after the Sultan had returned to his apartment, he said to his Grand Vizier, "I have for some time observed a certain woman, who attends every day that I give audience, with something wrapped up in a cloth. She always stands just before me. If this woman comes to our next audience, do not fail to call her."

The Grand Vizier made answer by lowering his hand and then lifting it up above his head, to show his willingness to lose the latter if he failed to obey his master's command.

VIII.—The Rival Suitors.

On the next day of audience Aladdin's mother came before the Sultan, bowed her head down to the carpet which covered the platform of the throne, and remained in that posture until he bade her rise. Then he said to her, "Good woman, what business brings you here?"

Aladdin's mother prostrated herself a second time, and when she arose, said, "Monarch of monarchs, I beg of you to assure me of your forgiveness."



Aladdin's mother prostrated herself.

"Well," replied the Sultan, "I will forgive you, be your fault what it may, and no hurt shall come to you; speak boldly." So she told him her story, concluding with the expression of her son's wish to marry the beautiful Princess.

The Sultan listened without showing the least anger; but before he gave her any answer, he asked her what she had brought tied up in the linen cloth. She took the china dish, which she had set down at the foot of the throne, untied the cloth which covered it, and presented it to the Sultan.

The Sultan's amazement was very great when he saw so many beautiful jewels collected in the dish. He remained for a long time lost in admiration. Then he received the present, saying, "How rich, how beautiful!" After he had admired and handled all the jewels, he turned

to his Grand Vizier and said, "Behold, admire, wonder! and confess that your eyes never before beheld jewels so rich and beautiful."



The Vizier was charmed. "Well," continued the Sultan, "ought I not to bestow my dear daughter on one who values her at so great a price?"

"I cannot but own," replied the Grand Vizier, "that the present is worthy of the Princess; but I beg of your Majesty to grant me three months before you come to a final decision. I hope that, before that time, my son, whom you have regarded with favour, will be able to make a still nobler present."

The Sultan granted his request, and then said to the woman, "Good woman, go home and tell your son that I cannot marry the Princess, my daughter, to any one for at least three months; at the end of that time come again."

Aladdin thought himself the most happy of all men upon hearing his mother's news, and thanked her warmly for the pains she had taken in the affair. When two of the three months were passed, his mother one evening went out to buy some oil, and found in the streets of the city signs of general rejoicing—the houses

dressed with foliage, silks, and carpeting, and all the people full of joy.

The streets were crowded with officers mounted on fine horses, each attended by a great many footmen. Aladdin's mother asked the oil merchant what was the meaning of all this festivity. "Whence come you, good woman," said he, "that you do not know that the Grand Vizier's son is to marry the Sultan's daughter to-night? She will presently return from the bazaar, and these officers are to conduct her to the palace."

Aladdin's mother, on hearing this news, ran home very quickly. "Child," she cried, "you are undone! This night the Grand Vizier's son is to marry the Princess."

At this account Aladdin was thunder-struck. But he determined, if possible, to prevent the marriage.

Making his way into his chamber, he took the lamp and rubbed it, when immediately the jinn appeared. "Hear me," said Aladdin. "I am about to impose on thee a hard task. The Sultan's daughter, who was promised me as my bride, is this night to be married to the son of the Grand Vizier. *Bring them both hither to me as soon as the festivities of the marriage are over."



“Master,” replied the jinn, “I obey you.”

Aladdin supped with his mother as was their custom, and then went to his own apartment, where he sat up to await the return of the jinn.

In the meantime the marriage feast took place in the Sultan’s palace. But no sooner had the guests departed than the jinn, by an invisible agency, transported the bride and bridegroom in an instant into the house of Aladdin’s mother.

“Remove the bridegroom,” said Aladdin to the jinn. “Keep him a prisoner till to-morrow morning, and then return with him here.” On Aladdin being left alone with the Princess, he explained to her the trick practised upon him by the Sultan, her father. He then begged her to rest, while he kept guard at the door of the room with a drawn sword in his hand.

At break of day the jinn appeared at the appointed hour, bringing back the Vizier’s son. Then at Aladdin’s command he transported the bride and bridegroom into the palace of the Sultan.

At the instant that the jinn had set down the bride and bridegroom in the palace, the Sultan came to offer his good wishes to his daughter. He kissed the Princess on the fore-

head, but was surprised to see her look so sad. He thereupon went immediately to his wife's apartment, and told her in what state he had found the Princess. "Sire," said the Sultan's wife, "I will go and see her. She will not receive me in the same manner."

The Princess received her mother with sighs and tears. At last, after having been reminded of the duty of telling her mother all her thoughts, she gave an account of all that had happened to her; on which her mother told her to keep silence, as no one would believe so strange a tale. In the evening the same thing happened again. And on the third day the Princess told her father of the strange events. He therefore declared that her marriage with the Grand Vizier's son was cancelled.

This sudden change in the mind of the Sultan caused great astonishment. Nobody but Aladdin knew the secret, and he kept it carefully; and neither the Sultan nor the Grand Vizier had the least idea that Aladdin had any hand in the strange adventures that had befallen the bride and bridegroom.



IX.—Forty Trays of Gold.

On the very day that the three months expired, the mother of Aladdin again went to

the palace, and stood in the same place in the divan.

After having prostrated herself, she said to the Sultan, "Sire, I come to ask of you the fulfilment of the promise you made to my son." The Sultan little thought that he would hear any more of the matter. But after a few words with the Vizier, he replied, "Good woman, I am ready to keep my word, and to make your son happy. But as he must be able to support the Princess in royal state, you may tell him I will fulfil my promise as soon as he shall send me forty trays of gold, full of the same kind of jewels you have already brought to me, and carried by the like number of black slaves, who shall be led by as many young and handsome white slaves, all magnificently dressed."

Aladdin's mother retired. On her way home she laughed within herself at her son's foolish imagination. "Where," said she, "can he get so many large gold trays, and such precious stones to fill them?" When she came home, full of these thoughts, she told Aladdin what the Sultan had said, and added, "The Sultan expects your answer immediately, but I believe he may wait long enough!"

"Not so long, mother, as you imagine,"

replied Aladdin. "This demand will prove no bar to my marriage with the Princess."

Aladdin retired to his own apartment, and called the jinn of the lamp to his aid. Within a very short time a train of forty black slaves, led by the same number of white slaves, appeared in the street. Each black slave carried on his head a tray of gold, full of precious stones—diamonds, rubies, and emeralds.

Aladdin then addressed his mother: "Madam, pray lose no time; return to the palace with this present."

As soon as the procession had set out, with Aladdin's mother at its head, the whole city was thronged with the crowds of people. The spectators were filled with the greatest wonder at the graceful bearing, elegant form, and wonderful likeness of the slaves, their grave walk at an equal distance from each other, the lustre of their jewelled girdles, and the brilliancy of the precious stones in their turbans.

They went into the Sultan's divan in regular order, one part turning to the right, and the other to the left. After they had formed a semicircle before the Sultan's throne, the black slaves laid the golden trays on the carpet and prostrated themselves, and at the same time the white slaves also made their obeisance.

When they rose the black slaves uncovered the trays, and then all stood still with their arms crossed over their breasts.

In the meantime Aladdin's mother, having prostrated herself, said to the Sultan, "Sire, my son knows that this present is unworthy of the notice of your daughter, the Princess, but hopes that your Majesty will accept of it, and make it agreeable to her."

The Sultan, overpowered at the sight, replied without hesitation, "Go and tell your son that I wait with open arms to embrace him." As soon as Aladdin's mother had retired, the Sultan ordered that the Princess's attendants should come and carry the trays into the apartment of their mistress.

In the meantime Aladdin's mother had reached her own home. "My son," said she, "the Sultan has declared that you shall now marry the Princess. He waits for you."

Aladdin retired to his chamber. There he rubbed his lamp, and the jinn appeared. "Jinn," said Aladdin, "convey me at once to a bath, and supply me with the richest robe ever worn by a monarch."

No sooner were the words out of his mouth than the jinn transported him into a bath of the finest marble. He was then well rubbed



*The attendants carried the trays into the apartment
of their mistress.*

and washed with various scented waters. After he had passed through several degrees of heat, he came out quite a different man from what he was before. His skin was as clear as that of a child, his body light and free; and when he returned into the hall, he found, instead of his own poor raiment, a splendid robe, the magnificence of which greatly astonished him.

The jinn helped him to dress, and transported him back to his own chamber, where he asked him if he had any other commands. "Yes," answered Aladdin: "bring me a charger that surpasses in beauty and goodness the best in the Sultan's stables. Furnish also twenty slaves to walk by my side and follow me, and twenty more to go before me in two ranks. Besides these, bring my mother six women slaves to attend her, as richly dressed as any of the Princess's, and each carrying a complete dress fit for any Sultan's wife. I want also ten thousand pieces of gold in each of ten purses; go, and make haste."

The jinn at once disappeared, but presently returned with the horse, the forty slaves, ten of whom carried each a purse containing ten thousand pieces of gold, and six women slaves, each carrying on her head a complete dress for Aladdin's mother.

He presented the slaves and the dresses to his mother. Of the ten purses Aladdin took four, which he gave to his mother; the other six he left in the hands of the slaves, with an order to throw the money by handfuls among the people. The six slaves who carried the purses he likewise ordered to march before him.

When Aladdin had thus prepared himself he began his march; and though he had never ridden on horseback before, he bore himself with a grace the best horseman might envy. The people among whom he passed made the air echo with their shouts, especially when the gold fell among them.

On Aladdin's arrival at the palace the Sultan embraced him with joy; and when the young man would have fallen at his feet, he held him by the hand, and made him sit down near his throne. He shortly afterwards led him, amidst the sounds of sweetest music, to an entertainment, at which the Sultan and Aladdin ate by themselves, and the great lords of the court sat at different tables.

After the feast the Sultan asked Aladdin if he would complete the ceremonies of the marriage that day. "Sire," said Aladdin, "I beg you to permit me first to build a palace worthy to receive the Princess, your daughter.



I pray you to grant me a piece of ground near your own palace, and I will have the new building completed with the utmost expedition." The Sultan granted this request, and again embraced him ; after which Aladdin took his leave.

Aladdin at once returned home. He retired to his own chamber, took the lamp, and summoned the jinn to him. "Jinn," said Aladdin, "build me a palace fit to receive the Princess. Let its materials be porphyry, jasper, agate, and the finest marble. Let its walls be of massive gold and silver bricks. Let each side contain six windows, and let the lattices of these (except one, which must be left unfinished) be enriched with precious stones. Let there be an inner and an outer court, and a spacious garden ; and provide a safe treasure-house, filled with gold and silver. Let there be also kitchens and storehouses, stables full of the finest horses, and hunting equipage, officers, attendants, and slaves, both men and women."

X.—The unfinished Window.

When Aladdin gave these commands, the sun had set. The next morning at daybreak the jinn presented himself, and transported him in a moment to the palace he had built and equipped. The jinn led him through all the apartments,



*When the young man would have fallen at his feet, the
Sultan held him by the hand. (See page 103)*

where he found officers and slaves, habited according to their rank. In the treasury Aladdin saw large vases of different sizes, piled up to the top with money, ranged all round the chamber. In the stables were some of the finest horses in the world. The storehouses were filled with all things necessary, both for food and ornament.

When Aladdin had examined every portion of the palace, he said, "Jinn, there is one thing wanting—namely, a fine carpet for the Princess to walk upon from the Sultan's palace to mine." This was at once supplied.

Aladdin next requested his mother to go to the Princess, and tell her that the palace would be ready for her in the evening. She went, attended by her women slaves, in the same order as on the preceding day. The Sultan himself came to meet her, and was surprised to find that she was now more richly attired than his own daughter. This gave him a higher opinion of Aladdin, who took such care of his mother, and made her share his wealth and honours.

Shortly after her departure, Aladdin, mounting his horse, left his paternal home for ever. Nor did he forget to take with him the wonderful lamp, to which he owed all his good

fortune, nor yet to wear the magic ring. The Sultan entertained him with the utmost magnificence; and at night, on the conclusion of the marriage ceremonies, the Princess took a tender leave of the Sultan, her father.

On her arrival at the new palace, Aladdin was ready to receive her at the entrance, and led her into a large hall, where a noble feast was served. The dishes were of solid gold, and contained the most delicate foods. The vases, basins, and goblets were of gold also, and of exquisite workmanship. The Princess, dazzled to see so much wealth collected in one place, said to Aladdin, "I thought, Prince, that nothing in the world was so beautiful as the palace of my father, the Sultan; but the sight of this hall alone is sufficient to show I have been deceived."

Next morning the attendants of Aladdin presented themselves to dress him, and brought him another habit, as rich and magnificent as that worn the day before. He then ordered one of the horses to be got ready, mounted him, and went, in the midst of a numerous retinue of slaves, to the Sultan's palace to entreat him to take a repast in the new palace.

The nearer the Sultan approached the wonderful palace the more he was struck with its

beauty ; but when he entered it, came into the hall, and saw the windows, enriched with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds, all large perfect stones, he was completely surprised, and said to his son-in-law, "This palace is one of the wonders of the world. But what most surprises me is, that the hall should be left with one of its windows unfinished." "Sire," answered Aladdin, "I wished that *you* should have the glory of finishing this hall." "I take your intention kindly," said the Sultan, "and will give orders about it immediately."

After the repast the Sultan was informed that the jewellers and goldsmiths of the city were already in waiting. "I sent for you," said he, "to fit up this window in as great perfection as the others. Examine them well, and make all the dispatch you can."

The jewellers and goldsmiths examined the three-and-twenty windows with great attention. Then the principal jeweller, speaking for the rest, said, "Sire, we are all willing to obey you, but among us all we cannot furnish jewels enough for so great a work." "I have more than are necessary," said the Sultan ; "come to my palace, and you shall choose as many as may answer your purpose."

When the Sultan returned to his palace, he

ordered his jewels to be brought out, and the jewellers took a great quantity, which they soon used up, without having made any great advance in their work. They came again several times for more, but in a month's time they had not finished half their work. In short, they used all the jewels the Sultan had, and then borrowed some from the Vizier; but still the work was far from being finished.

Aladdin, who knew that all the Sultan's endeavours to make this window like the rest would be in vain, then ordered them to undo what they had done, and to carry all the jewels back to the Sultan and to the Vizier. They undid the work in a few hours and retired, leaving Aladdin alone in the hall.

He then took the lamp, which he always carried about him, rubbed it, and presently the jinn appeared. "Jinn," said Aladdin, "make this window like the rest." Aladdin went out of the hall, and returning soon after found the window like the others.

Meanwhile the jewellers had gone to the palace and presented the precious stones to the Sultan. He ordered a horse to be brought, and rode to his son-in-law's palace, to inquire why he had ordered the making of the window to be stopped. Aladdin conducted him to the

grand saloon, where the Sultan, to his great surprise, found that the window which had been left imperfect was now as perfectly finished as the others.

He fancied at first that he was mistaken; but when he was convinced that the window had been finished in so short a time, he embraced Aladdin and kissed him between the eyes. "My son," said he, "what a man you are to do such surprising things, and always in the twinkling of an eye! The more I know the more I admire you."

After this Aladdin often went in great state, sometimes to one mosque, and sometimes to another, and at other times to visit the Grand Vizier or the principal lords of the court. Every time he went out his two slaves threw handfuls of money among the people as he passed by. This gained him the love and blessings of the populace. At the same time, he took care to pay all due respect to the Sultan.

XI.—New Lamps for Old.

Aladdin had lived in this manner for several years, when the African magician determined to find out whether he had perished in the subterranean cave or not. So by means of magic he learnt that Aladdin, instead of dying



*On the very next day the Magician set out for the
capital of China. (See page 112.)*

in the cave, had made his escape, and was living in royal splendour by the aid of the jinn of the wonderful lamp.

On the very next day the magician set out for the capital of China, where he took up his lodgings in a large khan.

He then quickly learnt about the wealth, charities, happiness, and splendid palace of Prince Aladdin. Directly he saw the wonderful fabric, he knew that none but the jinns, the slaves of the lamp, could have performed such wonders.

On his return to the khan he found out by magic that the lamp was in the palace. "Well," said he, rubbing his hands in great glee, "I shall have the lamp, and then I will make Aladdin return to his poverty."

The next day the magician learnt that Aladdin had gone on a hunting tour, which was to last for eight days, of which only three had expired.

He went to a coppersmith and asked for a dozen copper lamps. The master of the shop told him he had not so many by him, but if he would have patience till the next day they should be made ready. The magician desired him to take care that they should be handsome and well polished.

The next day the magician called for the lamps, and having paid the man his full price, put them into a basket, and went to the gateway of Aladdin's palace. Then he began crying, "Who will give me old lamps for new?" As he went along a crowd of children collected, who hooted at him; and all who chanced to be passing by thought him a madman, to offer to change new lamps for old.

But the magician still continued crying, "Who will give me old lamps for new?" He repeated this so often that the Princess, hearing a man cry something, and seeing a great mob crowding about him, sent one of her women slaves to learn what he was selling.

The slave returned, laughing so heartily that the Princess rebuked her. "Madam," answered the slave, "who can forbear laughing, to see an old man with a basket on his arm full of fine new lamps, asking to change them for old ones?"

Another female slave, hearing this, said, "Now you speak of lamps, there is an old one upon a shelf in Prince Aladdin's robing-room, and whoever owns it will not be sorry to find a new one in its stead. Let the Princess try if this old man will really give a new lamp for an old one."

The Princess, who knew not the true value of Aladdin's lamp, at once commanded a slave to take it and make the exchange. The slave obeyed, went out of the hall, and no sooner got to the palace gates than he saw the African magician. He called to him, and said, "Give me a new lamp for this old one."

The magician never doubted that this old lamp was the one he wanted. He snatched it eagerly out of the slave's hand, and offering him the basket, bade him choose which he liked best. The slave picked out one, and carried it to the Princess.

The magician now made the best of his way to his khan. His purpose was accomplished, and by his silence he got rid of the children and the mob.

As soon as he was out of sight of the two palaces, he hastened down the least-frequented streets. Then having pursued his way through the suburbs, which were very extensive, he at length reached a lonely spot, where he stopped till the darkness of the night should fall.

When it became quite dark, he pulled the lamp out of his breast and rubbed it. At that summons the jinn appeared, and said, "What wouldst thou have? I am ready to obey thee as thy slave, and the slave of all



those who have that lamp in their hands—both I and the other slaves of the lamp.”

“I command thee,” replied the magician, “to transport me and the palace of Aladdin, with all the people in it, to Africa.”

The jinn made no reply, but with the assistance of the other jinns obeyed the order immediately.

XII.—The Slave of the Ring.

Early the next morning, when the Sultan went to admire Aladdin’s palace, it could nowhere be seen. He could not comprehend how so large a palace should vanish so soon and not leave the least trace behind, so he ordered the Grand Vizier to be sent for.

The Grand Vizier intimated his suspicion that the palace had been built by magic, and had been removed by the same power. He induced the Sultan to send his guards, and to have Aladdin seized as a prisoner of state. The Prince was surrounded just as he was returning from the hunt.

On his son-in-law being brought before him, the Sultan would not hear a word from him, but ordered him to be put to death. The decree, however, caused so much discontent among the people that the Sultan, fearing a rebellion, was obliged to grant him his life.

When Aladdin found himself at liberty, he again addressed the Sultan : " Sire, I pray you to let me know my crime." " Your crime !" answered the Sultan ; " follow me, and I will show you." The Sultan then took Aladdin into the apartment from whence he was wont to look at the palace of his daughter, and said, " You ought to know where your palace stood ; tell me what has become of it."

Aladdin was speechless. At last he said, " It is true I do not see the palace. It has vanished ; but I had no concern in its removal. I beg you to give me forty days ; and if in that time I cannot restore it, I will offer my life to be disposed of at your pleasure." The Sultan agreed to this.

For three days Aladdin wandered about the city, exciting the wonder and compassion of the multitude by asking everybody he met if they had seen his palace. On the third day he wandered into the country, and as he was approaching a river he fell down the bank with so much violence that he rubbed the ring which the magician had given him ; and immediately the same jinn appeared whom he had seen in the cave where the magician had left him.

" What wouldst thou have ?" said the jinn.



*"You ought to know where your palace stood," said
the Sultan.*

"I am ready to obey thee as thy slave—both I and the other slaves of the ring."

Aladdin replied, "Jinn, show me where the palace now stands, or transport it back." "Your command," answered the jinn, "is not wholly in my power I am only the slave of the ring, and not of the lamp."

"I command thee, then," replied Aladdin, "to transport me to the spot where my palace stands." These words were no sooner out of his mouth than the jinn transported him into Africa, where his palace stood at no great distance from a large city; and placing him exactly under the window of the Princess's apartment, left him.

Now one of the attendants of the Princess saw him, and told her mistress. The Princess immediately opened the window. Aladdin, perceiving his wife, saluted her with joy. Then she said, "I have ordered the private door to be opened for you; enter the palace, and come up to me without delay."

Soon he found his way to the chamber of the Princess. After embracing, and shedding tears of joy, the Prince and Princess sat down, and Aladdin said, "I beg of you, Princess, to tell me what is become of an old lamp which stood upon a shelf in my robing-chamber."

"Alas!" answered the Princess, "I was foolish enough to change the old lamp for a new one, and the next morning I found myself in this country, which I am told is Africa."

"Princess," said Aladdin, "you have explained all by telling me that we are in Africa. Tell me where the old lamp is now." "The African magician carries it wrapped up in his bosom," said the Princess; "for he pulled it out before me and showed it to me in triumph."

"Princess," said Aladdin, "I think I have found the means of delivering you and of regaining possession of the lamp. I will go to the town and disguise myself. I will return by noon, and I beg that the private door may be opened at the first knock."

When Aladdin had left the palace he saw a peasant going into the country, and hastened after him. Then he made a proposal to him to change clothes, which the man agreed to do. Aladdin next entered the neighbouring city and sought out the shops. He went into that of the druggist, and asked if he had a certain powder which he named.

The druggist, judging Aladdin to be very poor, told him he had it, but that it was very costly; upon which Aladdin pulled out his purse,

and showing him some gold, asked for half a drachm of the powder. Thereupon the druggist weighed the powder and gave it to him, telling him the price was a piece of gold. Aladdin put the money into his hand, and hastened to the palace.

When he came into the Princess's apartment, he said to her, "Princess, you must take your part in my scheme. You must assume a most friendly manner towards the magician, and ask him to partake of an entertainment in your apartment. Ask him to exchange cups with you, and then give him the cup containing this powder. On drinking it he will instantly fall asleep, and we will obtain the lamp."

The Princess on the next visit of the magician gave him an invitation to an entertainment, which he most willingly accepted. At the close of the evening she asked him to exchange cups with her. He drank from the drugged cup out of compliment to the Princess, and at once fell backward lifeless on the sofa.

No sooner had the African magician fallen backward than the door opened, and Aladdin was admitted to the hall. The Princess rose from her seat and ran to embrace him, but he stopped her, and said, "Princess, retire to your apartment, and let me be left alone."

When the Princess had gone out of the hall, Aladdin shut the door and took the lamp from the magician's bosom. Then he rubbed it, and the jinn immediately appeared.

"Jinn," said Aladdin, "transport this palace instantly to the place from whence it was brought hither." At once the palace was transported back to China.

Next morning after the restoration of Aladdin's palace the Sultan was looking out of his window, and mourning over the fate of his daughter, when he saw his son-in-law's palace in the old place. Joy and gladness filled his heart. He at once ordered a horse to be saddled, thinking he could not make enough haste to reach the place.

Aladdin rose that morning at daybreak, and went up into the hall of twenty-four windows, from whence he perceived the Sultan approaching. He received him at the foot of the great staircase, and helped him to dismount.

He then led the Sultan into the Princess's apartment. The happy father embraced her with tears of joy; and the Princess, on her part, showed her extreme pleasure. After a short interval, devoted to explanations of all that had happened, the Sultan said to Aladdin, "My son, be not displeased at my proceedings; they arose



from the strength of my paternal love, and therefore you ought to forgive the excesses to which it hurried me." "Sire," replied Aladdin, "I have not the least reason to complain of your conduct, since you did nothing but what your duty seemed to require."

XIII.—The Magician's Brother.

Now the African magician had a younger brother, who was as skilful and wicked a magician as himself. Not hearing from his elder brother as usual, this man used magic to discover what had become of him. He found that his brother was dead; also, that the person who had punished him was of mean birth, though married to a Princess, a Sultan's daughter.

The magician departed for China without delay, and after crossing plains, rivers, mountains, deserts, and a long tract of rugged country, he arrived there after great exertion.

When he came to the capital of China he took lodgings in a khan. His magic art soon revealed to him that Aladdin was the person who had been the cause of his brother's death. He heard, too, all the people in the city talking of a holy woman called Fatima, who was retired from the world, and of the miracles she wrought. He made some inquiries about

this holy woman, and what sort of miracles she performed.

"What!" said the person whom he addressed, "have you never seen or heard of her? She is the admiration of the whole town for her fasting and her good life. Except on Mondays and Fridays, she never stirs out of her little cell; and on those days on which she comes into the town she does an infinite deal of good, for whenever she meets with sick people she puts her hand on them and cures them."

Having found out the place where the holy woman lived, the magician went at night and killed her. In the morning he dyed his face of the same hue as hers, and having arrayed himself in her garb, took her stick and went straight to the palace of Aladdin.

As soon as the people saw the holy woman, as they imagined the man to be, they gathered about him in a crowd. Some begged his blessing, others kissed his hand, and others the hem of his garment; while others, suffering from disease, stooped for him to lay his hands upon them.

He came at last to the square before Aladdin's palace. The crowd and the noise were so great that the Princess, who was in the hall of four-and-twenty windows, heard it, and asked one of her maidens to see what was the matter. The



*The Princess asked one of her maidens to see what
was the matter.*

girl soon told her it was a great crowd of people collected about the holy woman to be cured of their diseases.

The Princess, who had long heard of this woman, but had never seen her, was very desirous to speak with her, and the chief officer told her it was an easy matter to bring her in if she desired it; so the Princess immediately sent four slaves for the pretended holy woman.

As soon as the crowd saw the attendants from the palace they made way, and the magician advanced to meet them. "Holy woman," said one of the slaves, "the Princess has sent for you." "The Princess does me too great an honour," replied the false Fatima; and then he followed the slaves into the palace.

When the pretended Fatima had made her bow, the princess said, "My good mother, I have one thing to request of you: stay with me that I may learn from your good example."

"Princess," said the false Fatima, "I beg of you not to ask what I cannot consent to do without neglecting my prayers." "That shall be no hindrance," answered the Princess. "I have a great many apartments; you shall choose which you like best, and have as much liberty as if you were in your own cell."

The magician, who really desired nothing

more than to introduce himself into the palace, did not excuse himself further. "Princess," said he, "I dare not presume to oppose the will of so good and great a lady."

Upon this the Princess, rising up, said, "Come with me, and choose a room for yourself." The magician followed the Princess, and out of all the apartments chose that which was the worst.

Afterwards the Princess would have brought him back to dine with her; but he, considering that he should then be obliged to show his face, begged of her to excuse him, telling her that he never ate anything but bread and dried fruits. The Princess said, "You may be as free here, good mother, as if you were in your own cell. I will order you a dinner, which shall be served in your own room; but remember I expect to see you as soon as you have finished."

After the Princess had dined, the false Fatima again waited upon her. "My good mother," said the Princess, "I am overjoyed to see so holy a woman as yourself in this palace. Pray, how do you like it? And before I show it all to you, tell me first what you think of this hall."

Fatima surveyed the hall from one end to the other, and then said to the Princess, "This hall is truly admirable, and wants but one thing."



"What is that, good mother?" demanded the Princess.

"Princess," said the false Fatima, "forgive me the liberty I have taken, but my opinion is that if a roc's egg were hung up in the middle of the dome, your palace would be the wonder of the universe."

XIV.—The End of the Tale.

"My good mother," said the Princess, "what is a roc, and where may one get such an egg?"

"Princess," replied Fatima, "it is a bird of prodigious size which inhabits the summit of Mount Caucasus; the architect who built your palace can get you an egg of this bird."

After the Princess had thanked the false Fatima, she conversed with her upon other matters, but could not forget the roc's egg, which she resolved to request of Aladdin when next he should visit her apartments. She did so, and he said, "Princess, it is enough that you think it wants such an ornament; you shall see that there is nothing which I would not do for your sake."

Aladdin then went up into the hall of four-and-twenty windows, where, pulling the lamp out of his bosom he rubbed it, upon which the jinn appeared. "Jinn," said Aladdin, "bring

a roc's egg, to be hung up in the middle of the dome of the palace hall."

Aladdin had no sooner said these words than the hall shook as if ready to fall, and the jinn said, in a loud and terrible voice, "Is it not enough that I and the other slaves of the lamp have done everything for you, but you must command me to bring my master and hang him up in the midst of this dome? This request deserves that you, the Princess, and the palace should be reduced to ashes; and you are only spared because the prayer does not come from yourself.

"Its true author is the brother of the African magician, your enemy. He is now in your palace, disguised in the habit of the holy woman Fatima. His design is to kill you, therefore take care of yourself." After these words the jinn disappeared.

Aladdin at once resolved what to do. He returned to the Princess's apartment, sat down, and complained of a great pain in his head which had suddenly seized him. On hearing this, the Princess told him how she had invited the holy Fatima to stay with her, and that the woman was now in the palace; and at the request of the Prince, she ordered her to be summoned.

When the pretended Fatima came, Aladdin

said, "Come hither, good mother. I am tormented with a violent pain in my head, and request your assistance." So saying, he arose, but held down his head. The counterfeit Fatima advanced towards him, with his hand all the time on a dagger concealed in his girdle. But Aladdin, observing this, snatched the weapon from his hand and pierced him to the heart with it.

"My dear Prince, what have you done?" cried the Princess in surprise. "You have killed the holy woman!" "No, my Princess," answered Aladdin, with emotion, "I have not killed Fatima. This wicked man," added he, uncovering his face, "is the brother of the African magician. He has killed Fatima, and disguised himself in her clothes with intent to murder me."

Thus was Aladdin delivered from the two brothers who were magicians. Within a few years afterwards the Sultan died in a good old age. And as he left no son the Princess succeeded him, and she and Aladdin reigned together for many years in great happiness.



*William Morris.*

THE MAN BORN TO BE KING.

I.—The Sage's Prophecy.

THERE was once a powerful and wealthy king who dearly loved learning and wisdom, and who kept in his palace a number of wise men famous for every kind of knowledge.

One day, as the monarch sat upon his throne, dressed in rich robes of state, he saw in the crowd of people in his royal hall a little, wizened man with a pale face, from which gleamed two deep-set glittering eyes. When the banquet was over the king sent for the stranger.

"Welcome to our royal feast!" said he. "What is *your* lore? Can you tell stories of old time, or have you the power which can read men's histories in the stars of heaven? What gifts of wisdom do you bring to me?"

"O king," said the stranger, "there are indeed few things which I know with certainty, but as I studied the stars on the wind-swept down where I tend my sheep, I learnt a weighty secret which concerns yourself."

"Speak quickly," said the king eagerly, "and tell me your secret."

"Sire," returned the sage, "your ancient royal line will come to an end with you; and



"Welcome to our royal feast," said the king.

he who is to be king after you shall be of no loftier station than myself."

"That may be," said the monarch craftily. "But show me now some certain token of the truth of your words."

"I must speak to you alone," said the stranger; and at once the king stepped down from his throne and went with him into the royal garden. When they were alone under a bower of olive branches, the king turned to the man, and said, "Tell me your foolish tale; and having proved its foolishness, take this gold chain as a guerdon."

"Sir King," said the sage, somewhat sternly, "I have heard, no matter where, how Hugh the Earl Marshal died by your orders."

The monarch frowned. "You know that?" he said. "How if I were to cry out now for help? Who then would protect you?"

"Death will pass me by for many a year," said the stranger calmly; "I fear neither him nor you. Now I will return to my gray tower raised high above the down, and give myself up once more to studying the things which the future shall bring to pass."

Then the mysterious stranger left the garden and the royal hall, and turned his face towards the wind-swept down from whence he came.

And the king returned to his courtiers, wondering greatly at what he had heard.

Time passed by, and before long the king forgot all about the wizened man and his message. He married a beautiful princess, and the wedding-feast was celebrated with great pomp and splendour.

One day near the end of summer the king went with a grand hunting-party into the woods to chase the boar and the deer. As the day drew on they roused a mighty stag, and in the heat of the pursuit the king's horse outran all the others. Night came on, and the monarch found himself separated from his friends.

He did not know which way to take, and made up his mind to spend the night on a bed of fallen leaves. As he searched for a place of comfort, he spied at some distance a light through the trees. Making his way towards it, he found that it came from the doorway of a peasant's hut.

The king stepped forward to the door, but was met by a tall man who held a heavy club in his right hand. "You cannot enter here," said he, "for my wife is ill and like to die. There is, however, a stable behind the house, and there you may spend the night if you will. I will bring you food and drink."

The king thanked him and made a promise of rich reward, but the man answered, "We will not speak of that; my mind is full of other things than gain." Then he led his guest to a rough bed of straw, and brought him some coarse rye-bread and a bottle of sour wine. When the king had supped, he lay down and soon fell fast asleep.

But before an hour had gone by he woke again with a violent start, hearing strange noises which filled his heart with fear. He rose to his feet, and with his drawn sword in his hand passed out into the forest. But he heard only the sighing of the wind in the trees and the cries of the wild animals. So he went back to his comfortless bed, and falling asleep again, dreamt that he saw the wizened sage of the prophecy, who, bending his head towards him, with a mocking, mysterious smile said slowly, "Take, or give up. What matters it? The peasant's child shall surely sit upon your royal throne."

In the early dawn the king rose shivering, and went to the peasant's hut. There he found his host bent in speechless grief over the lifeless form of his wife, while in a rough cradle by the bed lay an infant boy.

As the king gazed long and curiously round

the poverty-stricken home of the peasant, he heard a great horn sounded without, and knew from the note that his men were near. Lifting his own horn he blew an answering blast, and soon the hunters came riding up to the door of the lowly hut.

With shouts of joy they greeted their royal master, who said to them in answer, "Sirs, this poor woodman gave me lodging for the night, in spite of his trouble, for at this moment his wife lies dead within. He shall have gold in payment; and further, I will take this new-born child and tend him well."

"Sire," said the stricken man, "it shall be as you will. Forgive me if, in my sorrow, I have little heart to give you thanks."

Then the king said to one of his squires named Samuel, "Bring the babe to me, and give the peasant these pieces of gold." The royal servant entered the hut, took up the child in its cradle, which was made of an old box lined with hay, and flung the royal bounty down upon the earthen floor. The peasant went down on his knees and gathered the gold pieces with eager hands; and in a few moments the royal party rode away, taking the baby with them.

When the riders had gone for some distance they came to a place where a wooden bridge



spanned a rushing stream. The king stopped, drew rein, and turning to his attendants, said, "Sirs, ride homeward by the highway while I follow at my leisure through the field-paths. Let the squire who bears the babe attend me, and no one else. In some house down by the stream I hope to find a nurse who will take charge of the boy until he is of age to learn how gold and glory may be won."

The order was at once obeyed. Then the king turned to the man who bore the child, and noted that on the side of the box wherein it lay was roughly painted a lion in red upon a ground of white. The box was half-filled with hay, which formed the only covering the young child had.

Then the king said to Samuel, "Ride close beside me, and listen with care to what I have to say." The man obeyed, and then the king told him frankly of the visit of the sage, of his dream in the peasant's stable, and of the prophecy that the child now lying in its cradle bed was destined to be king of the realm.

"But that shall never be," he said, in conclusion. "Surely, as you love me, you will throw the box into the stream. And if indeed the child is meant to come to my royal throne, he will be saved in spite of us."

I would do greater things than this to please you, my King," said the squire. "But perhaps the child will live—" "Yes, yes," said the king, with impatience. "I care for nothing if I can only see the box in the stream—and wrong side up, if fate so wills." Then the monarch rode onward across the wooden bridge.

The old man paused, and soon the king heard a splash and then an infant's cry. Turning in his seat, he looked down the stream, and watched the swift current carry away the box; and he noticed that as yet, at least, it floated right side up, and still held the helpless child.

With a frown upon his face, the king spurred forward his horse and rode at full speed to the palace gate. As he alighted from his steed there came a royal servant to tell him that during his absence a daughter had been born to him; and in joy at the news he forgot all else.

II.—The Boy Michael.

Fourteen years passed rapidly away, and one sweet morning in autumn the king rode out once more to the hunt. About noon he came to a mill by the water-side, and thinking that here was a pleasant spot for a midday meal, he reined in his horse and called the miller,

The man came at once and led his royal master across the river by a rustic bridge to a shady orchard. There, beneath the heavily-laden fruit trees, the king sat in merry mood and heartily enjoyed his meal. He laughed and joked with his courtiers, and took note of the pleasant spot, of the miller, and especially of a young lad who helped to wait upon him.

The boy was fair of face, blue-eyed, and yellow-haired. He seemed a sweet and fearless youth, and the king began to think that surely he could not be the son of the rough and red-faced owner of the mill.

"Miller," cried the monarch, "fetch out your wife, that we may see whether this stripling is more like to her than he is to you."

"My wife shall wait upon your pleasure, sire," answered the man. "But as for this boy, he is not our own child; for we found him, outcast and forlorn, some fourteen years ago."

The king's face grew troubled. He gazed at the boy, and as their eyes met his heart seemed to stand still with fear. Then the miller came forward, leading his wife, a black-haired woman, worn and bent with hard work, who carried in her hand something covered with a rough cloth.



The king gazed at the boy.

"Speak, dame," said her husband, "and tell the king your tale."

"My story," said the woman, "is short enough. Fourteen years ago this very day I was riding to market by the river path, when I heard a feeble cry from the side of the stream. Turning my head, I saw a box entangled in the weeds near the bank, and within it a tiny babe.

"Dismounting at once, I took up the rough bed and found the infant ready to die with cold and hunger. But I brought the little one home, and since that day we have kept him as our own. We called him Michael, seeing he was found near to Michaelmas. See, sire, the box in which he lay when I found him."

Thereupon she drew the cloth away, and the king saw once more the box in which had lain the child whom his squire had thrown into the stream. His heart was smitten with fear, but he made light of the matter, and as he rode home with his followers he forced himself to be merry and gay.

Samuel, the squire, who had wickedly helped the king in his need fourteen years before, was still living. On the next day the king sent for this man and talked with him in secret for a time. The squire then left his royal master's presence, mounted a horse, and rode away to the mill.

He found the boy Michael fishing in the stream, and dreaming the dreams of happy boyhood. The young fisher raised his eyes and saw the king's squire approaching him. This, he told himself, was surely a messenger from the miller's royal guest coming to summon him to court. Already his bright day dreams were drawing near to fulfilment.

As the old squire looked at the noble boy he muttered to himself, "Surely thou art meant to wear a crown!" Then he said aloud, "Boy, tell me where I can find the miller, for whom I have a message from the king, my master."

"Follow me, my lord," said the lad, leading the visitor into the mill-yard, where the miller stood. As soon as he saw the gaily-clad squire the man bowed low to the ground. "Read this," said the squire shortly, handing him a scroll.

"I am no clerk," said the miller, "but my wife can read the written word."

"Nay, trouble her not," said the other. "This paper requests the presence of this foundling lad at the royal court, where the king himself will see to his advancement."

"Needs must be when the king wills," said the miller; "though the lad is happy enough here," he added rather wistfully.



*G. F. Watts, R.A.*

The squire laughed somewhat scornfully. "Tis no life for a noble lad," he said. "Ask the youth himself."

"Tis a happy home," said the boy simply. "I can draw my bow in the wood, and have good hope of being able before long to shoot with the best. The stream is fair and good for sport. See how the rings on the water show where the fish rise to the fly."

"Tis the life of a churl," said the squire, with impatience. "You go with me to a better.—Miller, I am commanded to leave with you this bag of gold."

Then he turned to go, with his hand upon the shoulder of the boy, whose blue eyes were wet with unshed tears. At that moment the miller's wife came from her kitchen-work and threw her arms round the lad. "Fair son," she said, as gently as any high-born lady, "may you live in happiness and die in peace. You have had of our best, and our old hearts you have made young again."

"Enough, dame," said the squire, rather roughly, as he mounted his horse. The boy followed him slowly, and climbed into the seat behind him. Then they rode quickly away.

As they passed along the river-side path the beauty of the day soon soothed the sad heart of



Aspirations—G. F. Watts, R.A.

(Photograph by Hollyer.)

Michael, to whom the whole world now seemed lovely and bright. They crossed the bridge over which fourteen years before the wicked squire had thrown the boy in his rough cradle. Then they entered a deep and dark wood, in which the trunks of the trees seemed like a wall, so closely were they set together.

On they rode, until they had gone so far into the wood that the close-set trees stifled even the sound of the wind, and all was still. Michael now began to grow very drowsy. After a while they came to the edge of the wood and entered a lonely valley, where the squire drew rein. Here the wind blew freshly, and roused the boy from his drowsiness.

"Get down," said Samuel. "The ground here is too soft to bear the weight of both."

Michael slid lightly to the ground, and for a space walked onward by the side of the horse, singing gaily as he went. At the bottom of the valley Samuel cried in a gruff voice, "My girths are loose. Come here, boy, and draw the straps tighter."

The lad obeyed instantly; and as he stood with bent head near the horse, Samuel stealthily took out his dagger and stabbed him in the side. The poor boy leapt backward with a piteous cry for help, and then fell heavily to the earth.

In a moment the squire dismounted and knelt by the lad to finish his foul work. Then all at once there fell upon his ears the far-off sound of a tinkling bell. The man rose to his feet in terror, leapt upon his horse, and set off at topmost speed; nor did he draw rein until he came, half dead with fear and fatigue, to the gateway of the royal palace. At once he sought his master.

"The deed is done, O King!" he said, "and the prophecy is ended."

"I thought I had sent a *man* on this errand," said the king, in scorn, "but you come to me with a woman's face, and almost beside yourself with terror."

Before the winter was past Samuel was dead and lay buried in the minster of the royal city.

III.—The Castle of the Rose.

So the years passed by, and the king reigned in peace. But to his bitter sorrow no son was born to cheer his heart, and learn from him how to rule the great kingdom. When his daughter was a beautiful maiden of eighteen summers her mother died—not greatly to the regret of the monarch, who shortly afterwards married again.

A year later the king commanded his



*Sir E. Burne-Jones.*

daughter to make ready to go for a while to a distant royal lodge in a vineyard country, where she might spend a few weeks in healthful pastime. "Before a month has passed," he said, as she made ready to depart, "I will be with you; and further, I will bring with me the man whom you shall wed."

Then he kissed her, and the lovely princess went on her way, happy and free-hearted, not greatly caring to wed with any one. Onward she rode through the waving corn-lands, and no lark in the sweet summer heavens was more blithe or less earth-bound than she. As evening was falling she passed through the ancient gateway of the royal lodge, which was known as the Castle of the Rose; and as she alighted from her palfrey the moon's pale beam was not more tranquil than her sweet, young face.

As soon as she had left the royal palace, word was brought to the king that the abbot of the monastery on the edge of the forest wished to speak with him. Leave was given for the holy man to enter, and he came at once into the presence chamber, followed by a strong bodyguard of his servitors.

The king heard him patiently on matters which do not concern this story. Then he invited the abbot to take meat with him, and said,



Evening Peace—Sir E. Burne-Jones.
(*Photograph by Holtyer.*)

in a merry mood, "Lord Abbot, you feed stout men in your monastery. I wish I could muster such a bodyguard when I ride out to war."

Then looking closely at the abbot's guards, his eyes were arrested by the face of a man among the retainers. "Raise thy steel cap," he said to this man. "Methinks I know your face of old. Whence come ye?"

The man did as he was bidden, and lifting his steel cap revealed the face of Michael. Then, in response to the king's question, he told in a clear and ringing voice the story of his life up to the moment when he fell wounded in the hollow beyond the wood. "The sub-prior, my Lord Adrian, found me wounded in the wood," he said, in conclusion, "and has made me what you see."

Then Adrian, at the king's desire, continued the tale, and told how he found the boy Michael lying wounded in the hollow, and took him home to the monastery; how he tended and taught him, hoping to make a monk of him; and how the lad, though loving and obedient, begged that he might be allowed to choose some other calling.

During this time the king sat still, with a look of fear upon his face. Then rousing himself, he asked the abbot to leave Michael with

him, promising to advance the young man as he plainly merited. The abbot agreed to this quite readily, saying in a jesting mood that such a young man as Michael ought to prove his valour in a field where fair ladies judged the prize, and not among a band of monks.

Ten days later the king sent for Michael and said to him, "Take this letter to the Castle of the Rose, where my daughter is making her home for a season. My captain, Hugh, will set you fairly on your way, and you must not part with this letter except to the seneschal of the castle. Be wise and wary, and to-day shall be the birthday of your own good fortune."

Michael bowed low in reply, and taking the letter, went out with Hugh—a burly man of few words, and with a forbidding countenance. They rode southward, almost in silence, for the rest of the day.

At last they came to a place where a road branched off to the westward. The surly Hugh took off his hat in mock courtesy, and bowing low, with a sneer on his face, said to Michael, "Fair sir, here I must leave you and take the westward road, while you go still further to the southward. Farewell, my lord, and see that the beauty of her highness the princess does not tempt you to stare too rudely."



Michael made no reply, but rode onward till he reached a small inn, where he lodged for the night. Next morning he set out betimes upon his way, and rode steadily forward with cheerful heart and a song upon his lips. At night he rested at a city inn, and on the third day at full noontide he came to the opening of a valley fair with golden sheaves; and below him he saw the gilded spires of the Castle of the Rose.

On he went, the road dipping down between the hedges, which were sweet with brier roses. Through the quivering noontide haze he rode, and came at length to the gates of the castle, which stood wide open. Before them lay a drawbridge across a deep and silent moat overgrown with blossoms of the water-lily.

Within the shadow of the archway lay the warder, resting upon his cloak. But at the sound of horse's hoofs he rose and grasped his spear. Then catching a glimpse of the royal badge on Michael's coat, his face broke into a lazy smile, and he cried,—

“Ho! fine sir, what is your errand to my lady, the Princess Cecily?”

“I come from the king, her father,” said Michael, “with letters for my lord the seneschal who guards my royal mistress.”

“He feasts at present,” said the warder; “so

your letters must wait. But come, friend, tie your horse to the gate and seat yourself. I can sing you a merry song, if you please to listen; or I can give you admittance to the pleasant garden of the castle, where you may take your ease for a while."

"Thanks, friend," said Michael. "I greatly long to see this place of ancient peace."

"You cannot miss your way," said the man, pointing to a path which led to the left. "I will call you when my lord has finished his banquet."

Michael passed onward, and found the ancient garden so beautiful and peaceful that he felt as one in a dream, from which he feared to awake. Humming a quiet song he wandered about, and at last stopped at the side of a stone fountain, near which he stood for a while watching the darting gold-fish.

Then he threw himself down upon the grass, wishing to rest awhile. But so deep was the quiet of the place that in a few moments he fell into a gentle slumber.

IV.—The Princess Cecily.

Meanwhile the Princess Cecily herself had entered the quiet garden in the company of Agnes, the dearest of her maidens. Slowly

they walked onward with arms linked lovingly, their delicate silken dresses sweeping the soft velvet turf.

As they came forward they drew near to the fountain beside which Michael lay sleeping, and as soon as they caught sight of him they stopped abruptly. Then the maiden Agnes, bolder than her mistress, ran forward on tiptoe to look at the stranger. Soon she returned, her bright eyes aglow with youthful merriment.

"Did I not tell you that your lover would not wait for your father to bring him here?" she asked. "Come and see him. The great bell of the castle would not wake him, so soundly does he sleep."

"Nay," said the princess; "my father would forbid. Besides, I am born to be a queen in my own right, and have no wish to wed with any one."

"That would be well said," replied the other, "if indeed this youth were like others you have seen; but he is not. Come and see."

Then the princess allowed herself to be led forward, and as she looked downward at the sleeping youth she loved him once and for all.

Turning, she was about to speak to her companion, and was surprised to find her standing with a scroll in her hand which she had taken

from Michael's loosened belt. The princess moved silently towards her.

"Take and read it," said Agnes. "'Tis sad that such a fair youth should come to such an end."

Then the maidens stepped aside, and with burning eyes of shame and grief the princess read her father's royal message:—

"Lord-seneschal, the king sendeth greeting, and biddeth thee to put to death his enemy who beareth this message, and to place his head upon the topmost pinnacle of the Castle of the Rose. So perish all the enemies of His Majesty."

The princess trembled, and for a moment stood uncertain what to do or say. Then quickly her mind was fixed, and she said, "Wait beside him. If he wakes, hide him until I come again. Betray me not, and, above all, keep due silence."

Then the princess ran swiftly through the garden to her own room, where she took from between the leaves of a great book a royal scroll, duly sealed and signed, but blank. Seating herself, she seized a pen and quickly wrote on the parchment the following words:—

"Lord-seneschal, the king sendeth greeting. At this time we desire to wed our daughter, and have



chosen the bearer of this message to be her bridegroom. Make no delay, nor ask any question, but let the same day that thou receivest this be the marriage day of the princess, our beloved daughter."

Having finished this work, the princess laid down her pen, rolled up the scroll, and ran with all speed to the garden, fearing greatly that she might be too late. But when she reached the fountain she found Michael still asleep, and Agnes standing near him.

In a moment the girl seemed to guess what her mistress intended to be done ; for, taking the new scroll from the hand of the now trembling princess, she placed it gently and deftly in the belt of the sleeping youth.

Then all at once the courage of the Lady Cecily seemed to fail her, and she said, "Take me away. Perhaps it had been well if you had never led me hither."

"Say not so," said Agnes. "All shall be well if only you will boldly face the lord-seneschal." So saying she led her mistress to the other end of the garden ; and having left her there, she ran for food and drink.

"Shrink not, my beloved mistress," she said, when she came back, "from the work of mercy to which we have pledged ourselves."

The Princess Cecily roused herself, partook of the food, and soon felt refreshed and ready to play her part.

"Speak little, whatever may happen," said Agnes. "Our tale will unfold itself without much help from us."

Then they heard the sound of voices. Some of the lords of the castle were coming into the garden, dressed in the gayest of garments; and Cecily, stepping forth from the bower, walked proudly through their ranks until she came to the hall of audience. There she found Michael standing by the daïs, looking flushed indeed, but proud and calm as any prince.

"Princess," said the seneschal, "this message is from your royal father and my liege lord the king." Then he read from the scroll the words which the princess herself had written, while she stood still with her eyes bent modestly to the ground. When the lord-seneschal had finished, she raised them to the face of Michael and said gently,—

"Prince, I give you welcome. He whom my father loves is dear to me. May you find happiness from day to day till all our years have passed."

Michael was for the moment too much moved to reply; then he said eagerly, "For the royal

master who sent me here I would count it a joy to lay down my life. For you, sweet princess, what would I not dare?"

Then before another word could be spoken on either hand there broke forth the sound of fresh, young voices chanting a glad song. And taking the princess by the hand, Michael led her from the hall. As she laid her trembling hand in his she said to herself, "Ah! if he only knew what *I have dared*, how great his love would be!"

V.—*The End of the Tale.*

Meanwhile the king sat in his royal palace, ill at ease, for news had just reached his ears that the man whom he had chosen to be the husband of his daughter had been killed in a tournament. For a while he sat brooding deeply, and then made up his mind to ride out to the Castle of the Rose, and himself break the news to his daughter.

So he set out and rode on his way until he came in due time to the neighbourhood of the castle. As soon as he caught sight of the gilded spires he heard the sound of the warder's horn from the watch-tower.

At this he did not greatly wonder, thinking that it was the signal for those within the castle



The Golden Stairs—Sir E. Burne-Jones.

(Photograph by Hollyer.)

to prepare for the reception of their royal master. But when the horn was sounded again in what seemed to be a blast of defiance, he was somewhat puzzled.

"Push on," he said to his attendants, unwilling to let them know of his fears. "Hark how the joyous trumpet sounds because my daughter hopes to meet her bridegroom—the man who now lies dead."

So they rode onward until they heard the warlike sound of fife and drum.

Then the uneasy king raised his eyes to the turrets of the castle, hoping to see on the highest the head of his enemy. But no such comforting sign could he see. At that moment his party turned a corner of the road, and they saw a gaily-dressed throng awaiting them at the gate of the castle.

On either side of the approach to the gate stood a row of singing maidens, robed in cloth of gold. Nearer to the gate were the minstrels in scarlet coats, and behind them many lords and knights and men-at-arms in great array.

The king drew rein, and fear gripped his heart. Then he summoned up his courage, saying to himself, "At the worst I shall die; but even yet, long life may lie before me. I will await my fortune."

As these thoughts passed through his mind the crowd before him parted, and down the central path came Michael and his bride hand in hand, and fairer to the eye than any in that gallant company. They were dressed as prince and princess, and close behind them came two old knights who bore aloft the banners of the kingdom, and who were followed by the lord-seneschal of the Castle of the Rose.

As they came forward to greet him the king scowled heavily.

"What means this play?" he asked sternly. "What are ye? Whence come ye?"

No one spoke in reply. The princess clutched the hand of Michael, and seemed to those about her to speak a few words, but none heard what she said.

Then the king turned to the lord-seneschal.

"My lord," he said, in a questioning tone, "this young man—methinks he came to you as my messenger a week ago?"

"He did, my liege," was the ready answer, "and in accordance with your commands I wedded him straightway to your daughter."

"You did well, my lord," said the king. Then he sat still on his saddle for a few moments with his head bowed deep in thought, while the com-

pany waited breathlessly for the next words which should fall from his lips.

At last he raised his face with a smile.

"Shout aloud in joy," he cried, "for the wedding of the princess!"

At once the glad cries of the assembled company rent the air.

Then the king turned to Michael and said, "My lord, wear from to-day the royal collar of a prince, and from henceforth your servants shall bear before you the banner of a duke."

To the company he said, "This is my heir and my equal. Think not the less of him because he came to you dressed as my messenger, for he is a prince among men of whom any royal father may well be proud."

Then there arose a mighty shout of joy from the company. The monarch leapt to the ground and took the hands of the young bridegroom and his lovely bride.

"How many days of bliss and happiness I should have enjoyed," he said, "if I had schooled my heart to humility, and left alone what was no concern of mine. Yet I will strive for the rest of my time to live my life from day to day without thought of what lies behind me and before."



Then he gave the sign to the company to return to the castle. So amid shouts of joy the happy lovers and the repentant king passed onward through the wide-flung gates of the Castle of the Rose.

Told from the Poem by
WILLIAM MORRIS.

THE STORY OF BALIN.

I.—The Damsel and the Sword.

WHILE King Arthur was holding high festival in Camelot, before he was married to the beautiful Princess Guinevere, there happened a strange adventure. As he was sitting one day in the great hall of the palace, holding council with his barons, there came a damsel bearing to him a message from the great Lady Lyle of Avalon. She wore a mantle richly furred; and when she let it drop from her shoulders, it was seen that she was girt with a noble sword.

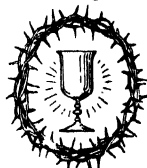
At this the king marvelled, and said, "Damsel, for what cause art thou girt with that sword? Such gear befits not a lady."

"Sir," answered the damsel, "this sword I carry not with any good-will. It is to me a cause of great sorrow; but I cannot be delivered from it save by a good knight, who must be not only strong of his hands, but clean of any fault. If I can find such a knight, then may he draw the sword from the scabbard, and so shall I be rid of the enchantment that belongs to it. But never yet have I found any knight who could draw the sword. At one time I was at the court of King Rience, because I had



Sir Galahad—G. F. Watts, R.A.
(*Photograph by Hollyer.*)

The
Holy



Grail.

heard that many noble knights were there; but though he and all his court tried to draw the sword, there was not one that could prevail."

When King Arthur heard this he marvelled still more.

"Damsel," he said, "I will myself try to draw out the sword, not presuming upon myself that I am the best knight, but to give example to my barons, that they also may attempt it."

So the king took the sword by the hilt, and pulled eagerly at it, but it came not forth.

"Sir," said the damsel, "you need not pull at it half so hard, for he that shall draw it forth will be able to do so with little strength."

"Then," answered Arthur, smiling—though, in truth, he did not well like his misadventure—"this achievement is not for me. So now, my barons, let all of you try it; but beware that ye are not defiled with shame, treachery, or guile."

"That will not be enough," said the damsel; "for he that draweth the sword must be mighty of his hands as well as a pure knight, and of noble descent, both on the father's and mother's side."

Then all the knights and barons that were at that time about King Arthur tried to draw the

sword; but when all of them had striven, it still remained fast in the scabbard. Then the damsel made great lament, saying that she had thought to find at this court at least one good knight that was without fault.

"Well," said the king, "by my faith I have here as good knights as any that are in the world at this time, but it seems there is not any of them that is worthy to help you."

II.—Balin draws the Sword.

Now it happened that there was in the hall at that time a poor knight of Northumberland, named Balin le Savage. He did not belong to Arthur's court, but had been kept prisoner by the king for some time for having slain a knight of his kin. But though he had no estate, yet he was of good blood and of great prowess; and some of the barons had obtained his pardon, because it was in fair fight that he had killed the knight for whose death he was imprisoned.

Now he stood and watched the king and all his barons try to draw the sword; and when none of them could do so, he greatly desired to attempt it in his turn, but was ashamed to stand forward because, having but just come out of prison, he was in mean attire. But at last, when the damsel had made her obeisance



to King Arthur and the lords, and was about to leave the hall, Balin took heart, and said to her,—

“Damsel, I pray you of your courtesy to suffer me to draw that sword if I can; for though I be poorly clothed, yet am I a knight, and it may happen that success shall fall to me.”

Then the damsel looked at him, and saw that he was a likely man of his body; but because of his mean array, she could not believe him to be a man of high birth. So she said,—

“Sir, there is no need to put me to further trouble in this matter, for there is scant likelihood that you will speed well where so many great lords and brave knights have failed.”

Then Balin answered her that worthiness and manhood were not in raiment, but in him that wore it; and again he besought her to let him try to draw the sword. So without more words she assented, and lo! when he took the hilt in his hand he drew forth the sword easily. The king and all his barons wondered much that Balin should have been able to do that which they could not, and some of the knights were very angry.

“Truly,” said the damsel, “thou art the best knight that ever I found, without any shame

or treachery, and many marvellous deeds wilt thou accomplish. Now, gentle and courteous knight," she said, "give me the sword again."

But Balin found the sword exceedingly fair to look upon, and he would not give it up. The damsel entreated him, and warned him that it would bring about his destruction; but of that he took no heed, so she left the court, sorrowing much that he would not give her the sword again.

Then Balin got his armour and his horse, and made ready to ride forth. The king begged him to stay at his court, promising to make amends for all the harm he had done him, and to give him advancement. Balin thanked him for his graciousness, but said that he must depart without loss of time.

But while Balin was making ready there came into the hall that Lady of the Lake who had given to King Arthur his sword Excalibur. She entered on horseback, richly clad, and having saluted the king, said she had come to claim the boon he had promised her.

"Ask what you will," said King Arthur, "and you shall have it, if it lie in my power to give it."

"Well," said the lady, "I ask the head of that knight who hath won the sword, or else

the head of the damsel that brought it; and though I shall have both their heads, I shall still sorrow, for the knight slew my brother, who was a good knight and true, while that damsel was the cause of my father's death."

"Truly," replied King Arthur, "I cannot grant you the head of either of them with honour; therefore ask what else you will, and I shall surely fulfil your desire."

But the lady would not ask nor have anything else. And now it chanced that Balin saw her, and knew her for his worst enemy, for she had brought about the death of his mother. When it was told him that she had asked his head of the king, he was exceedingly wrathful. He went straight up to her, and said in a passion,—

"Thou wouldst have my head, and therefore shalt thou lose thine own." Then suddenly he raised the sword and struck off her head in the presence of the king and all the court.

Then the king was full of anger against Balin, and reproached him sharply. The knight excused himself as well as he could, saying that the lady had, by witchcraft, been the destroyer of many good knights, and that she had been the means of his mother's death.

But Arthur answered him sternly, "Whatsoever cause of complaint you had against her,



*"Into Thy
hands,
O Lord!"*



(From the painting by Briton Riviere, in the Manchester City Gallery.)

you should have held your hand in my presence. Such a wrong was never before done me in my court, and therefore you will do well to depart hence with what speed you may."

So the dead lady was buried with great pomp, and Balin set forth sorrowfully because of the king's anger.

III.—The Death of Sir Lancelot.

Now there was at the court a knight named Sir Lancelot, the son of a king in Ireland. He was very proud, and counted himself one of the best knights, and he felt angry at Balin because of his winning of the sword. Therefore he asked leave of the king to ride after Balin and avenge the deed which that knight had done. The king granted his request, and bade him do his best, for he wished that Balin might be punished for his fault.

Sir Lancelot armed himself, and taking spear and shield, rode hotly after Balin. After a while he came in sight of him, and called upon him to stop. When Balin heard him he turned his horse, and asked him if he desired to joust.

"Yes," answered the knight. "For that cause am I come."

"Peradventure," said Balin, "you had done better to stay at home; for many a man who



seeks to put his enemy to rebuke is himself put to shame. But whence come you?"

"I come from the court of King Arthur," said the knight of Ireland, "to avenge the insult you have given there this day."

"I should be unwilling to quarrel with you," answered Balin, "for I would not give more offence to the king than there is already. Moreover, there is small need for you to take up the quarrel of the lady that I slew, for she was an enemy to all good knights."

"Make you ready," said Sir Lanceor, "and meet me, for one of us shall abide in the field."

It befell as he had said; for when the two knights encountered, Sir Lanceor broke his spear on Balin's shield. But Balin gave so fierce a thrust that he ran his spear through the other's armour and pierced his body, so that he fell back dead from his horse.

Immediately thereafter a damsel came up who had long loved Sir Lanceor, and when she saw him dead she grieved beyond measure, and before Balin could prevent it she had killed herself with her lover's sword; at which piteous sight Balin was truly sorrowful.

While he stood there another knight came up to him, and when he approached, Balin knew from the arms he bore that it was his

brother Balan, who was almost as much renowned as himself. They were heartily rejoiced to meet; and while they were telling each other their adventures, there passed by a knight called King Mark of Cornwall.

When he saw Lanceor and the damsel lying dead, he made inquiry as to the cause, and Balin told him. King Mark was filled with pity that such true lovers should have ended their lives so sadly; and he pitched his tent at that place, and caused his squires to put the dead knight and lady in a rich tomb, on which he had this inscription written: "Here lieth Lanceor, a king's son of Ireland, that at his own request was slain by the hands of Balin; and his Lady Colombe, who slew herself with her lover's sword out of grief and sorrow."

Now while King Mark was erecting the tomb, Merlin the magician came, and foretold that at that place there should afterwards be a great battle betwixt the two best knights of the world. Also he warned Balin that, because of the death of the Lady Colombe, he should before long strike the most dolorous stroke that ever man struck, for it would cause three kingdoms to be in great poverty, misery, and wretchedness for twelve years.

Therewith Merlin suddenly vanished; and



The two knights encountered. (See page 171.)

so Balin and Balan rode on their way, and had many adventures together. But after a while they separated, and each sought adventures for himself.

IV.—The Invisible Knight.

Within a day or two Balin came where King Arthur, feeling weary of his life in court, had set up a pavilion in a meadow, and was lying therein on a pallet. Just before Balin came, a knight had passed, making great sorrow; and when the king had asked him the cause, he had refused to tell it. So, after Balin had courteously saluted the king, Arthur asked him to go after that same knight, and make him return either of his own good-will or by force.

This Balin readily undertook, and rode after the knight, whom he found with a damsel in a forest. When Balin bade him return, at first he would not; but when Balin made ready to enforce him he consented, and rode back, leaving the damsel behind him. Now just as they reached the king's pavilion, suddenly there came one who went invisible, and smote the stranger-knight through the body with a spear.

"Alas!" said the knight to Balin, "now am I done to death while under your conduct and guard. He that has slain me is a traitorous

knight named Garlon, that goes always invisible. I pray you ride with the damsel, and follow the quest that I was in, wherever she will lead you, and avenge my death when you may."

This Balin swore to do, and then departed; and King Arthur caused the murdered knight to be honourably buried.

Balin rode on with the damsel, and as they journeyed through the forest a worthy knight named Sir Perin, who had been hunting, met and saluted them, and asked Balin why he seemed so sorrowful. When he had heard the story, he offered to go with them; but as they were all three riding past a hermitage, the false knight Garlon again came invisible and struck down Sir Perin, even as he had slain the other.

Then the hermit and Balin buried him, and placed a tomb over him; and after that Balin and the damsel continued their journey.

At nightfall they came to a castle, and as the gates were open they went forward, meaning to enter and spend the night there. Balin went first, and as soon as he had ridden by himself within the gate, the portcullis was suddenly dropped behind him; and at the same time many men rushed out of an ambush and seized the damsel.

When Balin saw that he could not ride back to her help, he dismounted, got upon the wall, and leaped down into the outer ditch. Then he drew his sword and rushed upon the men that were near the damsel. But they were no more than squires and churls, and they would not fight with him.

The maiden and Balin were entertained in the castle all night, and had right good cheer. The next day they continued their journey, and in the evening rested with a knight that had a great castle and kept a rich table. While they sat at supper Balin heard some one crying as if in pain, and he asked what was the matter.

"I will tell you," said his host. "I was lately at a tournament, and jousting twice with a knight who is brother to King Pellam, and twice I smote him down. Then he vowed to have vengeance on my best friend, and he has sorely wounded my son, who cannot be healed till I have that knight's blood. He often rides invisible, but I do not know his name."

"But I know it," answered Balin. "His name is Garlon, and by his treachery he has slain two knights that were with me. I had rather meet with him than have all the gold in this realm."

The other then told him that King Pellam

had appointed to hold a great feast at his royal city of Listenise, and that if they went thither they should see his brother Garlon. On hearing this Balin was glad, and the next day he and the damsel set out.

V.—The Dolorous Stroke.

After a long journey they reached Listenise, and were well received at the king's castle. Balin was led to a chamber where certain squires unarmed him, gave him rich robes, and would then have taken his sword from him. But he would not consent, for he said it was the custom in his country for a knight always to keep his sword by his side.

So he was allowed to keep his sword; and then he went down into the great hall with the damsel, and was set at the high table. Soon Balin asked a knight if there was not a lord in that court named Garlon. The other said yes, and pointed out Garlon where he sat at the table. Balin gazed earnestly at him, pondering what he should do; for to set on him before all those knights' would, he thought, be perilous indeed.

But Garlon, when he saw how Balin looked at him, went up to him and smote him on the face with the back of his hand, saying,—

“Knight, why dost thou look at me in such



fashion? For shame! Eat thy meat, and do that for which thou camest hither."

"Thou sayest well," answered Balin. "This is not the first despite thou hast done me, and therefore I will do that for which I came."

At once he rose up and smote Garlon with his sword so fiercely that he slew him outright. Then he called the knight who had brought him to Listenise, and said he might now heal his son.

But all the knights rose up from the table to smite Balin, and King Pellam cried, "Knight, why hast thou slain my brother? For this deed shalt thou die."

"Well," said Balin, "do thou thyself slay me."

"Yes," the king cried fiercely, "none other but myself shall have to do with thee, for my brother's sake."

So all the other knights stood back, and King Pellam came fiercely at Balin with an iron mace in his hand. Balin warded the blow with his sword, but the heavy mace shattered the sword to pieces in his hand. Then he turned about, and ran round the chamber seeking a weapon, but could find none. So he fled into another chamber, still looking for a weapon, and King Pellam followed after him.

At last Balin came to a great chamber that

was splendidly furnished, and in it stood a bed arrayed with cloth of gold of the richest sort. By the bed was a table of pure gold standing on four silver pillars, and on the table lay a marvellous spear, strangely wrought. Balin seized it without regarding aught but the peril he was in. Then he turned on King Pellam, who was following hard after him, and smote him with the spear.

Immediately the king sank down in a swoon, as though he had been dead, and the castle walls were riven and fell in ruins. Few of all the great company that were within them escaped; for the spear with which Balin had wounded King Pellam was the same with which our Lord was wounded on the cross; and now Balin had struck the dolorous stroke of which Merlin had forewarned him.

For three days Balin lay insensible within the ruins; and then Merlin came to him and restored him, and got him a good horse, and bade him ride out of that country.

VI.—Balin slays his Brother.

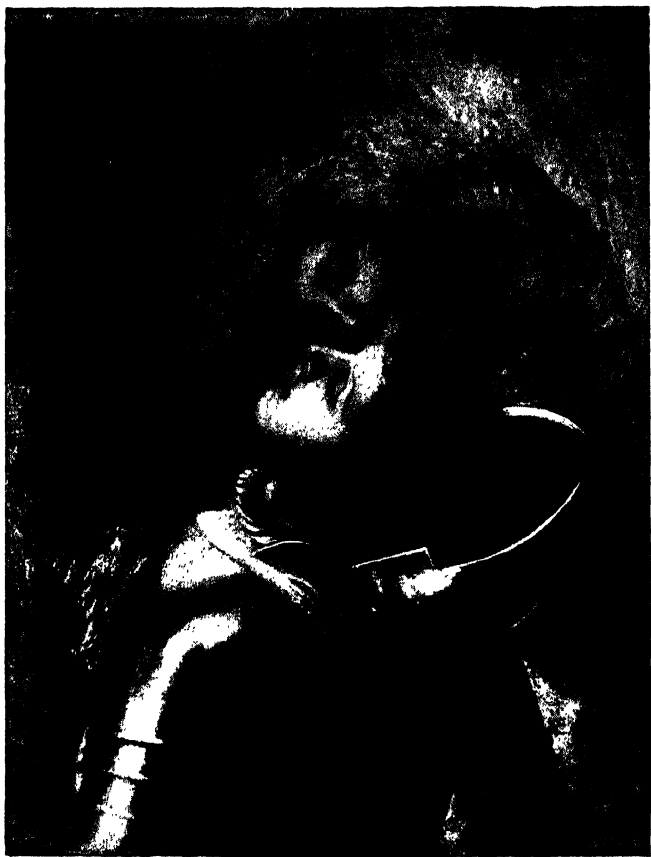
Balin would have taken his damsel with him, but she had perished in the falling of the castle. For twelve years King Pellam suffered grievously from the wound Balin had given

him, and could never be healed till the good knight Galahad healed him while on the quest of the Holy Grail; and through this same stroke of Balin all King Pellam's countries were suddenly reduced to great misery.

As for Balin, he rode on his way with a heavy heart, and had many other adventures, which need not be recounted here; for as it had been aforetime, ever since he took the sword from the damsel in King Arthur's court, he brought nothing but woe to all that had to do with him, because of the heat of his temper, although he was ever pure in his heart and full of true courage.

At last he came to a castle where there were many knights and ladies, and they greeted him courteously. But after he had been thus entertained, the lady of the castle told him that he must joust with a knight who kept an island close by, for it was a custom of the castle that no man might pass except he jousted.

"It is an unhappy custom," said Balin, "that I must joust whether I be willing or not. However, since it is so, I am ready. Though my horse be weary with travel, my heart is not weary; but I should grieve little if I were going to my death." For he saw that the curse of the sword he had taken was ever with him.



The Happy Warrior—G. F. Watts, R.A.
(*Photograph by Hollyer.*)

"Sir," said one of the knights of the castle, "methinks your shield is not good. I will lend you a better." So he gave Balin a shield with a strange device, and Balin left behind him his own shield, which bore his arms. Then he rode to meet the knight with whom he was to joust, who came forth armed all in red.

This was none other than his brother Balan, but he knew not Balin because of the strange device on his shield. So the two knights ran together with such force that both were overthrown. After that they drew their swords and fought for a long time with such might and hardihood as had never before been seen, and each gave the other a mortal wound. At last Balan withdrew a little and lay down on the ground.

"What knight art thou?" said Balin. "Never before this found I any knight that matched me as thou hast done."

The other answered him, "I am Balan, brother to the good knight Balin le Savage."

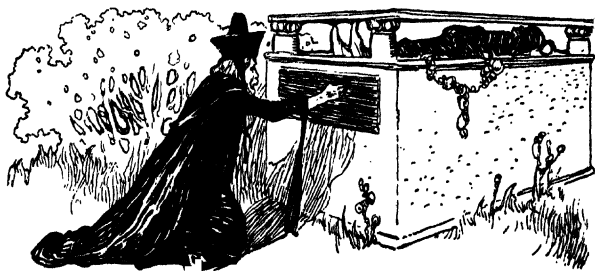
"Alas," said Balin, "that ever I should see this day." And he fell back in a swoon.

Then Balan crept to him and unloosed his helmet, and found that it was his brother. When Balin came to himself again, both lamented sorely, and Balin told how a knight

of the castle had changed shields with him, so that Balin should not know him. Within a little while both of them died, and the chief lady of the castle caused them to be buried in one tomb.

On the morrow Merlin came, and wrote on the tomb an inscription in letters of gold, telling how Balin le Savage, that had won the sword and struck the dolorous stroke, lay there with his brother, the two having met in mortal combat without knowing each other. Merlin also wrought many marvellous enchantments at the tomb, and predicted that Balin's sword should come into the hands of the best knight in the world.

Thus piteously died Balin le Savage, who was as good a knight as any that lived in his days, and a man of great nobleness, but who ever brought sorrow to others and to himself after he had kept the sword which he won from the maiden in King Arthur's court.



THE EMPEROR'S NEW CLOTHES.

MANY years ago there was an emperor who was so very fond of new clothes that he spent all his money on dress. He did not trouble himself in the least about his soldiers; nor did he care to go either to the theatre or the chase, except for the opportunities then afforded him for displaying his new clothes. He had a different suit for each hour of the day; and as of any other king or emperor one is accustomed to say, "He is sitting in council," it was always said of him, "The emperor is sitting in his wardrobe."

Time passed away merrily in the large town which was his capital, and many strangers arrived every day at the court. One day two rogues, calling themselves weavers, made their appearance. They gave out that they knew how to weave stuffs of the most beautiful colours and elaborate patterns, the clothes made from which should have the wonderful property of remaining invisible to every one who was unfit for the office he held, or who was very simple and foolish in character.

"These must indeed be splendid clothes," thought the emperor. "Had I such a suit I might at once find out what men in my



Two rogues, calling themselves weavers, made their appearance.

realm are unfit for their offices, and also be able to tell the wise from the foolish. This stuff must be woven for me immediately." Then he caused large sums of money to be given to both the weavers, in order that they might begin their work without delay.

So the pretended weavers set up two looms, and affected to work very busily, though in reality they did nothing at all. They asked for the most delicate silk and the purest gold thread, put both into their own knapsacks, and then continued their pretended work at the empty looms until late at night.

"I should like to know how the weavers are getting on with my cloth," said the emperor to himself, after some little time had elapsed. He was, however, rather put out when he remembered that a simpleton, or one unfit for his office, would be unable to see the manufacture. "To be sure," he thought, "I have nothing to risk in my own person; but yet I would prefer sending somebody else to bring me news about the weavers and their work before I trouble myself in the affair." All the people of the city had heard of the wonderful property the new cloth was to possess, and all were anxious to learn how wise or how ignorant their neighbours might prove to be.

"I will send my faithful old minister to the weavers," said the emperor at last, after some thought. "He will be best able to see how the cloth looks, for he is a man of sense, and no one can be more suitable for his office than he."

So the honest old minister went into the room where the knaves were working with all their might at their empty looms. "What can be the meaning of this?" thought the old man, opening his eyes very wide. "I cannot discover the least bit of thread on the looms!" However, he did not express his thoughts aloud.

The impostors asked him very courteously to be so good as to come nearer their looms; and then asked him whether the design pleased him, and whether the colours were not very beautiful, at the same time pointing to the empty frames.

The poor old minister looked and looked. He could not discover anything on the looms; for a very good reason—namely, there was nothing there. "What!" thought he again, "is it possible that *I* am a simpleton? I have never thought so myself; and at any rate, if I am so, no one must know it. Can it be that I am unfit for my office? No, that must not be said of me either. I will never confess that I could not see the stuff'



"Well, Sir Minister," said one of the knaves, still pretending to work, "you do not say whether the stuff pleases you."

"Oh, it is admirable!" replied the old minister, looking at the loom through his spectacles. "This pattern, and the colours—yes, I will tell the emperor without delay how very beautiful I think them."

"We shall be much obliged to you," said the weavers; and then they named the different colours and described the patterns of the pretended stuff. The old minister listened carefully to their words, in order that he might repeat them to the emperor; and then the knaves asked for more silk and gold, saying that it was necessary to complete what they had begun. However, they put all that was given them into their knapsacks, and continued to work at their empty looms with as much make-believe diligence as before.

The emperor now sent another officer of his court to see how the men were getting on, and to ask whether the cloth would soon be ready. It was just the same with this gentleman as with the minister. He surveyed the looms on all sides, but could see nothing at all except the empty frames.

"Does not the stuff appear as beautiful to



*"The gossips of the whole district were
talking about the matter."*

(See page 190.)

you as it did to my lord the minister?" asked the impostors of the emperor's second messenger. At the same time they continued making the same gestures as before, and talking of the design and colours which were not there.

"I certainly am not stupid!" thought the messenger. "It must be that I am not fit for my good, profitable office. That is very sad; however, no one shall know anything about it." So he praised the stuff he could not see, and declared that he was delighted with both colours and patterns. "Indeed, your Imperial Majesty," said he to his sovereign when he returned, "the cloth which the weavers are preparing is magnificent."

The gossips of the whole district were now talking of the splendid cloth which the emperor had ordered to be woven at his own expense.

And now the emperor himself wished to see the costly fabric whilst it was still on the loom. Along with a select number of officers of the court, among whom were the two men who had already admired the cloth, he went on a visit to the crafty impostors. As soon as they were aware of the emperor's approach the two rogues went on working more diligently than ever, although they still did not pass a single thread through the looms.

"Is not the work magnificent?" said the two officers of the crown already mentioned. "If your Majesty will only be pleased to look at it. What a splendid design! what glorious colours!" and at the same time they pointed to the empty frames; for they thought that every one but themselves could see this exquisite piece of work.

"How is this?" said the emperor to himself. "I can see nothing! This is, indeed, a terrible affair. Am I a simpleton, or am I unfit to be an emperor? Either of these would be the worst thing that could happen.—Oh, the cloth is charming!" said he aloud. "It has my entire approval."

Then he smiled most graciously, and looked closely at the empty looms; for on no account would he say that he could not see what two of the officers of his court had praised so much. All his courtiers now strained their eyes, hoping to discover something on the looms, but they could see no more than the others; nevertheless they all exclaimed, "Oh, how beautiful!" and advised his Majesty to have some new clothes made from this splendid material for the approaching procession. "Magnificent! charming! excellent!" resounded on all sides, and every one was very gay. The emperor shared

in the general satisfaction, and presented the impostors with the ribbon of an order of knighthood to be worn in their buttonholes, and the title of "Gentlemen Weavers."

The rogues sat up the whole of the night before the day on which the procession was to take place, and had sixteen lights burning, so that every one might see how anxious they were to finish the emperor's new suit. They pretended to roll the cloth off the looms, cut the air with their scissors, and sewed with needles without any thread in them. "See," cried they at last, "the emperor's new clothes are ready!"

And now the emperor, with all the grandees of his court, came to the weavers, and the rogues raised their arms as if in the act of holding something up, saying, as they did so, "Here is your Majesty's tunic; here is the scarf; here is the mantle! The whole suit is as light as a cobweb; a man might fancy he is wearing nothing at all when he is dressed in it. That, however, is the great virtue of this delicate cloth."

"Yes, indeed," said all the courtiers, although not one of them could see anything of it.

"If your Imperial Majesty will be graciously

pleased to take off your robes, we will fit on the new attire in front of the looking-glass."

The emperor accordingly took off his robes, and the rogues pretended to array him in his new garments, the emperor meanwhile turning round from side to side before the looking-glass.

"How splendid his Majesty looks in his new clothes, and how well they fit!" every one cried out. "What a design! what colours! These are, indeed, royal robes."

"The canopy which is to be borne over your Majesty in the procession is waiting," announced the chief master of the ceremonies.

"I am quite ready," answered the emperor. "Do my new clothes fit well?" asked he, turning himself round again before the looking-glass, in order that he might appear to be examining his handsome suit.

The lords of the bed-chamber, who were to carry his Majesty's train, felt about on the ground as if they were lifting up the ends of the mantle, and pretended to be carrying something; for they would by no means betray anything like simplicity or unfitness for their office.

So now the emperor walked under his high canopy in the midst of the procession through the streets of his capital; and all the people standing by and those at the windows cried



out, "Oh! how beautiful are our emperor's new clothes! What a magnificent train there is to the mantle! and how gracefully the scarf hangs!" In short, no one would allow that he could not see these much-admired clothes, because, in doing so, he would have declared himself either a simpleton or unfit for his office. Certainly, none of the emperor's various suits had ever excited so much admiration as this.

"But the emperor has no robes on at all!" said a little child. "Listen to the voice of innocence!" exclaimed his father; but what the child had said was whispered from one to another.

"But he has no robes on at all!" at last cried out all the people. The emperor was vexed, for he knew that the people were right; but he thought "the procession must go on now." And the lords of the bed-chamber took greater pains than ever to appear holding up a train, although, in reality, there was no train to hold.

HANS ANDERSEN.



THE DRAGON-FLY AND THE WATER-LILY.

IN among the green bushes and trees ran the brook.

Tall, straight-growing rushes stood along its banks and whispered to the wind. Out in the middle of the water floated the water-lily with its white flower and its broad, green leaves.

Generally it was quite calm on the brook. But when now and again it chanced that the wind took a little turn over it, there was a rustle in the rushes, and the water-lily sometimes ducked completely under the waves; and its leaves were lifted up in the air and stood on their edges, so that the thick green stalks that came up from the very bottom of the stream found that it was all they could do to hold fast. All day long the larva of the dragon-fly was crawling up and down the water-lily's stalk.

"Dear me, how stupid it must be to be a water-lily," it said, and peeped up at the flower.

"You chatter as a person of your small mind might be expected to do," answered the water-lily. "It is just the very nicest thing there is."

"I don't understand that," said the larva. "I should like at this moment to tear myself



away, and fly about in the air like the big, beautiful dragon-flies."

"Pooh!" said the water-lily, "that would be a funny kind of pleasure. No; to lie still on the water and dream, to bask in the sun, and now and then to be rocked up and down by the waves—there's some sense in *that*."

The larva sat thinking for a minute or two.

"I have a longing for something greater," it said at last. "If I had my will, I would be a dragon-fly. I would fly on strong, stiff wings along the stream, kiss your white flower, rest a moment on your leaves, and then fly on."

"You are ambitious," answered the water-lily, "and that is stupid of you. One knows what one has, but one does not know what one may get. May I, by the way, make so bold as to ask you how you would set about becoming a dragon-fly? You don't look as if that was what you were born for. In any case, you will have to grow a little prettier, you gray, ugly thing."

"Yes, that is the worst part of it," the larva answered sadly. "I don't know myself how it will come about, but I hope it *will* come about some time. That is why I crawl about down here, and eat all the little creatures I can get hold of."



*"They chase one another,
and are never at peace."*

(See page 199.)



"Then you think you can attain to something great *by feeding!*" the water-lily said, with a laugh. "That would be a funny way of getting up in the world."

"Yes; but I believe it is the right way for me!" cried the dragon-fly grub earnestly. "All day long I go on eating till I get fat and big; and one fine day, as I think, all my fat will turn into wings with gold on them, and everything else that belongs to a proper dragon-fly!"

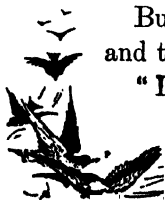
The water-lily shook its clever white head.

"Put away your silly thoughts," it said, "and be content with your lot! You can hide undisturbed down here among my leaves, and crawl up and down the stalk to your heart's desire. You have everything that you need, and no cares or worries; what more do you want?"

"You are of a low nature," answered the larva, "and therefore you have no sense of higher things. In spite of what you say, I wish to become a dragon-fly!" And then it crawled right down to the bottom of the water to catch more tiny creatures for another meal.

But the water-lily lay quietly on the water and thought things over.

"I can't understand these animals," it said



to itself. "They move about from morning till night, chase one another and eat one another, and are never at peace. We flowers have more sense. Peacefully and quietly we grow up side by side, bask in the sunshine and drink the rain, and take everything as it comes. And I am the luckiest of them all. Many a time have I been floating happily out here on the water, while the other flowers on the dry land were tormented with drought. The lot of the flowers is the best, but naturally the stupid animals can't see that!"



When the sun went down, the dragon-fly larva was sitting on the stalk, saying nothing, with its legs drawn up under it. It had eaten ever so many little creatures, and was so big that it had a feeling of complete fullness. But, all the same, it was not altogether happy. It was speculating on what the water-lily had said, and it could hardly get to sleep the whole night long on account of its unquiet thoughts. All this speculating gave it a headache, for it was work which it was not used to. It had a backache, too, and also a stomach-ache. Soon it felt just as though it was going to break in pieces and die on the spot.

When the sky began to grow gray in the early morning, it could hold out no longer.



"I can't make it out," it said, in despair. "I am tormented and worried, and I don't know what will be the end of it. Perhaps the water-lily is right, and I shall never be anything else but a poor, miserable larva. But that is a fearful thing to think of. I did so long to become a dragon-fly, and flit about in the sun. Oh, my back! my back! I do believe I am dying!"

It had a feeling as if its back was splitting, and it shrieked with pain. At that moment there was a rustle among the rushes on the bank of the stream.

"That's the morning breeze," thought the larva. "I shall at least see the sun when I die." And with great trouble it crawled up one of the leaves of the water-lily, stretched out its legs, and made ready to die. But when the sun rose like a red ball in the east, suddenly the larva felt a hole in the middle of its back. It had first a creepy, tickling feeling, and then a feeling of tightness and oppression. Oh, it was torture without end!

Being bewildered, it closed its eyes, but it still felt as though it were being squeezed and crushed. At last it suddenly noticed that it was free, and when it opened its eyes it was floating through the air on stiff, shining wings,



"What a pretty water-lily!" (See page 204.)



a beautiful dragon-fly. Down on the leaf of the water-lily lay its ugly gray larva-case.

"Hurrah!" cried the new dragon-fly. "So I have got my darling wish fulfilled!" And it started off at once through the air at such a rate that you would think it had to fly to the ends of the earth.

"The creature has got its desire, at any rate," thought the water-lily. "Let us see if it will be any the happier for it."

Ten days later the dragon-fly came flying back, and seated itself on the flower of the water-lily.

"Oh, good-morning," said the water-lily. "Do I see you once more? I thought you had grown too fine to greet your old friends."

"Good-day," said the dragon-fly. "Where shall I lay my eggs?"

"Oh, you are thinking of laying some eggs, are you?" answered the flower. "Sit down for a bit, and tell me if you are any happier now than when you were crawling up and down my stalk, a little ugly larva."

"Where shall I lay my eggs? where shall I lay my eggs?" screamed the weary dragon-fly, and it flew humming around from place to place, laid one here and one there, and finally seated itself on one of the leaves.

"Well?" said the water-lily.

"Oh, it was better in the old days—much better," sighed the dragon-fly. "The sunshine is truly delightful, and it is a real pleasure to fly over the water; but I have no time to enjoy it. I have been so terribly busy, I tell you. In the old days I had nothing to think about. Now I have to fly about all day long to get my eggs disposed of. I haven't a moment free; I have scarcely time to eat."

"Didn't I tell you so?" cried the water-lily, in triumph. "Didn't I prophesy that your happiness would be hollow?"

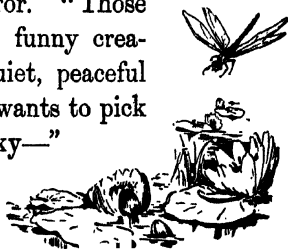
"Good-bye," sighed the dragon-fly. "I have not time to listen to your disagreeable remarks. I must lay some more eggs."

But just as it was about to fly off the starling came.

"What a pretty little dragon-fly!" it said. "It will be a delightful tit-bit for my little ones."

Snap! It killed the dragon-fly with its bill, and flew off with it.

"What a shocking thing!" cried the water-lily, as its leaves shook with terror. "Those animals! those animals! they are funny creatures! I do indeed value my quiet, peaceful life. I harm nobody, and nobody wants to pick a quarrel with me. I am very lucky—"



It did not finish what it was saying, for at that instant a boat came gliding close by.

"What a pretty little water-lily!" cried Ellen, who sat in the boat. "I will have it."

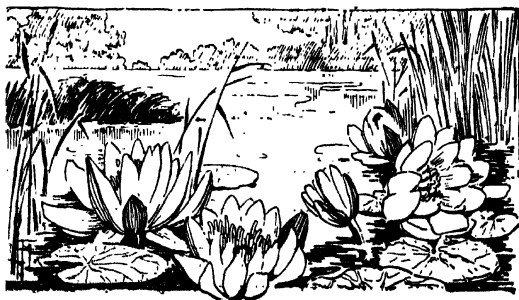
She leaned over the gunwale and wrenched off the flower. When she reached home she put it in a glass of water, and there it stood for three days among a whole company of other flowers.

"I cannot make it out!" it said on the morning of the fourth day. "I have not come off a bit better than that miserable dragon-fly."

"The flowers are now withered," said Ellen, and she threw them out of the window. So there lay the water-lily, with its fine white petals on the dirty ground.

Translated from the Danish of CARL EWALD by

PROFESSOR G. C. MOORE-SMITH.



THE UGLY DUCKLING.

I.—The Obstinate Egg.

It was beautiful in the country. It was summer time: the wheat was yellow; the oats were green; the hay was stacked up in the green meadows; and the stork paraded about on his long red legs, talking Egyptian, which language he had learned from his mother. The fields and meadows were skirted by thick woods, and a deep lake lay in a hollow among the trees.

Yes, it was indeed beautiful in the country. The sunshine fell warmly on an old mansion, surrounded by deep canals; and from the walls down to the water's edge there grew large burdock-leaves, so high that children could stand upright among them without being perceived.

This place was as wild and lonely as the thickest part of the wood, and on that account a duck had chosen to make her nest there. She was sitting on her eggs; but the pleasure she had felt at first was now almost gone, because she had been there so long, and had so few visitors. For the other ducks preferred swimming on the canals to sitting on the burdock-leaves gossiping with her.



At last the eggs cracked one after another—"Tchick, tchick!" All the eggs were alive, and one little head after another peered forth.

"Quack, quack!" said the duck, and all got up as well as they could. They peeped about from under the green leaves; and as green is good for the eyes, their mother let them look as long as they pleased.

"How large the world is!" said the little ones, for they found their present situation very different from their former confined one in the egg-shells.

"Do you imagine this to be the whole of the world?" said the mother. "It extends far beyond the other side of the garden to the pastor's field; but I have never been there. Are you all here?" And then she got up. "No, not all; but the largest egg is still here. How long will this last? I am so weary of it!" And then she sat down again.

"Well, and how are you getting on?" asked an old duck, who had come to pay her a visit.

"This one egg keeps me so long," said the mother; "it will not break. But you should see the others! They are the prettiest little ducklings I have seen in all my days. They are all like their father—the good-for-nothing fellow, he has not been to visit me once!"

"Let me see the egg that will not break," said the old duck. "Depend upon it, it is a turkey's egg. I was cheated in the same way once myself, and I had such trouble with the young ones, for they were afraid of the water, and I could not get them there. I called and scolded, but it was all of no use. But let me see the egg—ah, yes! to be sure, that is a turkey's egg. Leave it, and teach the other little ones to swim."

"I will sit on it a little longer," said the duck. "I have been sitting so long that I may as well spend the harvest here."

"It is no business of mine," said the old duck, and away she waddled.

The great egg burst at last. "Tchick! tchick!" said the little one, and out it tumbled; but, oh! how large and ugly it was! The duck looked at it.

"That is a great, strong creature," said she. "None of the others are at all like it. Can it be a young turkey-cock? Well, we shall soon find out; it must go into the water, though I push it in myself."

II.—The Jest of the Yard.

The next day there was delightful weather, and the sun shone warmly upon all the green




The farmer at the beehives.

leaves when mother duck with her new family went down to the canal. Plump she went into the water. "Quack! quack!" cried she, and one duckling after another jumped in. The water closed over their heads, but all came up again, and swam together in the pleasantest manner, their legs moving without effort. All were there, even the ugly gray one.

"No, it is not a turkey," said the old duck "Only see how prettily it moves its legs; how upright it holds itself. It is my own child; it is also really very pretty, when one looks more closely at it. Quack! quack! now come with me. I will take you into the world, and introduce you in the duck-yard. But keep close to me, or some one may tread on you; and beware of the cat!"

So they came into the duck-yard. There was a horrid noise—two families were quarrelling about the remains of an eel, which in the end were secured by the cat.

"See, my children, such is the way of the world," said the mother duck, wiping her beak, for she too was fond of eels. "Now use your legs," said she. "Keep together, and bow to the old duck you see yonder. She is the most distinguished of all the fowls present, and is of Spanish blood. And look, she has a red rag on



her leg ; that is considered extremely handsome, and is the greatest distinction a duck can have. Don't turn your feet inwards ; a well-educated duckling always keeps his legs far apart, like his father and mother—just so. Look ! now bow your necks, and say ' Quack. '

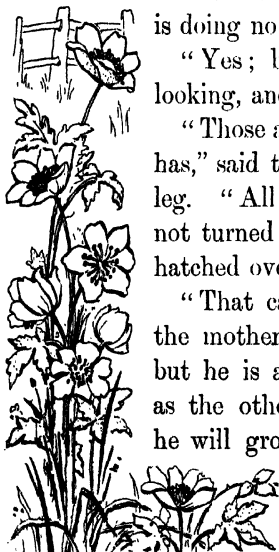
And they did as they were told. But the other ducks who were in the yard looked at them, and said aloud, " Only see ! now we have another brood, as if there were not enough of us already ; and fie ! how ugly that one is. We will not endure it ; " and immediately one of the ducks flew at the ugly duckling, and bit him in the neck.

" Leave him alone, " said the mother. " He is doing no one any harm. "

" Yes ; but he is so large, and so strange-looking, and therefore he *shall* be teased. "

" Those are fine children that our good mother has, " said the old duck with the red rag on her leg. " All are pretty except one, and that has not turned out well. I almost wish it could be hatched over again. "

" That cannot be, please your highness, " said the mother. " Certainly he is not handsome, but he is a very good child, and swims as well as the others—indeed, rather better. I think he will grow like the others all in good time,



and perhaps will look smaller. He stayed so long in the egg-shell, that is the cause of the difference," and she scratched the duckling's neck and stroked his whole body. "Besides," added she, "he is a drake. I think he will be very strong, therefore it does not matter so much. He will fight his way through."

"The other ducks are very pretty," said the old duck. "Pray make yourselves at home, and if you find an eel's head you can bring it to me."

And accordingly they made themselves at home.

But the poor little duckling who had come last out of the egg-shell, and who was so ugly, was bitten, pecked, and teased by both ducks and hens. "It is so large!" said they all. And the turkey-cock who had come into the world with spurs on, and therefore fancied he was an emperor, puffed himself up like a ship in full sail, and marched up to the duckling quite red with passion. The poor little thing scarcely knew what to do. He was quite distressed, because he was so ugly, and because he was the jest of the poultry-yard.

So passed the first day, and afterwards matters grew worse and worse—the poor duckling was scorned by all. Even his brothers and

sisters behaved unkindly, and were constantly saying, "The cat fetch thee, thou nasty creature!" The mother said, "Ah, if thou wert only far away!" The ducks bit him, the hens pecked him, and the girl who fed the poultry kicked him. He ran over the hedge; the little birds in the bushes were terrified. "That is because I am so ugly," thought the duckling, shutting his eyes; but he ran on.

III.—With the Wild Ducks.

At last he came to a wide moor, where lived some wild ducks. Here he lay the whole night, very tired and very comfortless. In the morning the wild ducks flew up, and at once perceived their new companion. "Pray, who are you?" asked they; and our little duckling turned himself in all directions, and greeted them as politely as possible.

"You are really uncommonly ugly!" said the wild ducks. "However, that does not matter to us, provided you do not marry into our families."

Poor thing! he had never thought of marrying; he only begged permission to lie among the reeds and drink the water of the moor.

There he lay for two whole days. On the third day there came two wild geese, or rather



The ducks bit him, and the hens pecked him.

ganders, who had not been long out of their egg-shells, which accounts for their impertinence.

"Hark ye," said they, "you are so ugly that we like you very well. Will you come with us and be a bird of passage? On another moor, not far from this, are some dear, sweet wild geese, as lovely creatures as have ever said 'hiss, hiss.' You are truly in the way to make your fortune, ugly as you are."

Bang! A gun went off all at once, and both wild geese were stretched dead among the reeds. The water became red with their blood. Bang! Another gun went off. Whole flocks of wild geese flew up from among the reeds, and a third report followed.

There was a grand hunting-party. The hunters lay in ambush all around; some were even sitting in the trees, whose huge branches stretched over the moor. The blue smoke rose through the thick trees like a mist, and was dispersed as it fell over the water. The hounds splashed about in the mud, the reeds and rushes bent in all directions.

How frightened the poor little duckling was! He turned his head, thinking to hide it under his wings, and in a moment a most formidable-looking dog stood close to him,



his tongue hanging out of his mouth, his eyes sparkling fearfully. He opened wide his jaws at the sight of our duckling, showed him his sharp, white teeth, and splash, splash! he was gone—gone without hurting him!

“Well, let me be thankful,” sighed he. “I am so ugly that even the dog will not eat me.”

And now he lay still, though the shooting continued among the reeds, shot following shot.

The noise did not cease till late in the day, and even then the poor little thing dared not stir. He waited several hours before he looked around him, and then hastened away from the moor as fast as he could. He ran over fields and meadows, though the wind was so high that he had some difficulty in proceeding.

Towards evening he reached a wretched little hut, so wretched that it knew not on which side to fall, and therefore remained standing. The wind blew violently, so that our poor little duckling was obliged to support himself on his tail, in order to stand against it; but it became worse and worse. He then remarked that the door had lost one of its hinges, and hung so much awry that he could creep through the crevice into the room, which he did.



IV.—In the Cottage.

In this room lived an old woman, with her tom-cat and her hen; and the cat, whom she called her little son, knew how to set up his back and purr—indeed, he could even emit sparks when stroked the wrong way. The hen had very short legs, and was therefore called “Cuckoo Short-legs.” She laid very good eggs, and the old woman loved her as her own child.

The next morning the new guest was perceived; the cat began to mew and the hen to cackle.

“What is the matter?” asked the old woman, looking round. However, her eyes were not very good, so she took the young duckling to be a fat duck which had lost its way. “This is a capital catch,” said she; “I will keep this fine bird and send it to market.”

Now the cat was the master of the house, and the hen was the mistress, and they used always to say, “We and the world,” for they thought themselves to be not only the half of the world, but also by far the better half. The duckling thought it was possible to be of a different opinion, but that the hen would not allow.

"Can you lay eggs?" asked she.

"No."

"Well, then, hold your tongue."

And the cat said, "Can you set up your back? Can you purr?"

"No."

"Well, then, you should express no opinion when sensible persons are speaking."

So the duckling sat alone in a corner, and was in a very bad humour. However, he happened to think of the fresh air and bright sunshine, and these thoughts gave him such a strong desire to swim again that he could not help telling it to the hen.

"What ails you?" said the hen. "You have nothing to do, and therefore brood over these fancies. Either lay eggs or purr, then you will forget them."

"But it is so delicious to swim," said the duckling—"so delicious when the waters close over your head, and you plunge to the bottom!"

"Well, that is a queer sort of pleasure," said the hen. "I think you must be crazy. Not to speak of myself, ask the cat—he is the most sensible animal I know—whether he would like to swim, or to plunge to the bottom of the water. Ask our mistress, the old woman—there is no one in the world wiser than she.



Do you think she would take pleasure in swimming, and in the waters closing over her head?"

"You do not understand me," said the duckling.

"What, we do not understand you! So you think yourself wiser than the cat and the old woman, not to speak of myself. Do not fancy any such thing, child, but be thankful for all the kindness that has been shown you. Are you not lodged in a warm room, and have you not the advantage of society from which you can learn something? But you are a simpleton, and it is wearisome to have anything to do with you. Believe me, I wish you well. I tell you unpleasant truths, but it is thus that real friendship is shown. Come, for once give yourself the trouble to learn to purr, or to lay eggs."

"I think I will go out into the wide world again," said the duckling.

"Well go," answered the hen.

So the duckling went. He swam on the surface of the water, he plunged beneath; but all animals passed him by on account of his ugliness. And the autumn came: the leaves turned yellow and brown, the wind caught them and danced them about, the air was

very cold, the clouds were heavy with hail or snow, and the raven sat on the hedge and croaked. The poor duckling was certainly not very comfortable.

V.—The Swans.

One evening, just as the sun was setting with unusual brilliancy, a flock of large, beautiful birds rose from out of the brushwood. The duckling had never seen anything so beautiful before; their plumage was of a dazzling white, and they had long slender necks. They were swans. They uttered a singular cry, spread out their long, splendid wings, and flew away from these cold regions to warmer countries across the open sea.

They flew so high, so very high! and the little ugly duckling's feelings were so strange. He turned round and round in the water like a mill-wheel, strained his neck to look after them, and sent forth such a loud and strange cry that it almost frightened himself. Ah! he could not forget them, those noble birds, those happy birds! When he could see them no longer, he plunged to the bottom of the water, and when he rose again was almost beside himself.

The duckling knew not what the birds were

called, knew not whither they were flying, yet he loved them as he had never before loved anything. He envied them not, for it would never have occurred to him to wish such beauty for himself. He would have been quite contented if the ducks in the duck-yard had but endured his company—the poor, ugly animal!

And the winter was so cold, so cold! The duckling was obliged to swim round and round in the water to keep it from freezing; but every night the opening in which he swam became smaller and smaller. It froze so that the crust of ice crackled; the duckling was obliged to make good use of his legs to prevent the water from freezing entirely. At last, wearied out, he lay stiff and cold in the ice.

Early in the morning there passed by a peasant, who saw him, broke the ice in pieces with his wooden shoe, and brought him home to his wife.

He now revived. The children would have played with him, but our duckling thought they wished to tease him, and in his terror jumped into the milk-pail, so that the milk was spilled about the room. The good woman screamed and clapped her hands. He flew thence into the pan where the butter was



kept, and thence into the meal-barrel and out again—and then how strange he looked !

The woman screamed and struck at him with the tongs ; the children ran races with each other trying to catch him, and laughed and screamed likewise. It was well for him that the door stood open. He jumped out among the bushes into the new-fallen snow ; then he lay there as in a dream.

VI.—The Wonderful Change.

It would be too melancholy to relate all the trouble and misery that our duckling was obliged to suffer during the severe winter. He was lying on a moor among the reeds when the sun began to shine warmly again. The larks sang, and beautiful spring returned.

Then once more he shook his wings. They were stronger than formerly, and bore him forwards quickly, and before he was well aware of it, he was in a large garden where the apple-trees stood in full bloom, where the lilacs sent forth their fragrance and hung their long green branches down into the winding canal.

Oh ! everything was so lovely, so full of the freshness of spring. And out of the thicket came three beautiful white swans. They displayed their feathers so proudly, and swam so



Beautiful Spring returned.

lightly, so lightly! The duckling knew the glorious creatures, and was seized with a strange sadness.

"I will fly to them, those kingly birds," said he. "They will kill me, because I, ugly as I am, have dared to approach them; but it matters not. Better to be killed by them than to be bitten by the ducks, pecked by the hens, kicked by the girl who feeds the poultry, and to have so much to suffer during the winter."

He flew into the water, and swam towards the beautiful creatures. They saw him, and shot forward to meet him. "Only kill me," said the poor animal, and he bowed his head low, expecting death; but what did he see in the water? He saw beneath him his own form, no longer that of a plump, ugly, gray bird—it was that of a swan!

The good creature felt himself really better for all the troubles he had gone through. He could now truly estimate his own happiness, and the larger swans swam round him and stroked him with their beaks.

Some little children were running about in the garden. They threw grain and bread into the water, and the youngest exclaimed, "There is a new one!" The others also cried out,

"Yes, a new swan has come!" and they clapped their hands and danced around. They ran to their father and mother; bread and cake were thrown into the water; and every one said, "The new one is the best, so young and so beautiful," and the old swans bowed before him.

The young swan felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wings. He scarcely knew what to do; he was all too happy, but still not proud, for a good heart is never proud.

He remembered how he had been mocked; and he now heard every one say he was the most beautiful of all beautiful birds. The lilacs bent down their branches towards him low into the water, and the sun shone so warmly and brightly. He shook his feathers, stretched his slender neck, and in the joy of his heart said, "How little did I dream of so much happiness when I was the ugly, despised duckling!"

It matters not to have been born in a duck-yard, if one has been hatched from a swan's egg.



THE PIED PIPER OF HAMELIN.

I.

HAMELIN town's in Brunswick,
 By famous Hanover city;
 The river Weser, deep and wide,
 Washes its wall on the southern side;
 A pleasanter spot you never spied:
 But, when begins my ditty,
 Almost five hundred years ago,
 To see the townsfolk suffer so
 From vermin, was a pity.

*Robert Browning.*

II.

Rats!
 They fought the dogs and killed the cats,
 And bit the babies in the cradles,
 And ate the cheeses out of the vats,
 And licked the soup from the cooks' own ladles,
 Split open the kegs of salted sprats,
 Made nests inside men's Sunday hats,
 And even spoiled the women's chats,
 By drowning their speaking
 With shrieking and squeaking
 In fifty different sharps and flats.

III.

At last the people in a body
 To the Town Hall came flocking.
 "Tis clear," cried they, "our Mayor's a noddy!"
 And as for our Corporation—shocking

To think we buy gowns lined with ermine
For dolts that can't or won't determine
What's best to rid us of our vermin !
You hope, because you're old and obese,
To find in the furry civic robe ease ?
Rouse up, sirs ! Give your brains a racking
To find the remedy we're lacking,
Or, sure as fate, we'll send you packing !"
At this the Mayor and Corporation
Quaked with a mighty consternation.

IV.

An hour they sat in council ;
At length the Mayor broke silence :
" For a guilder I'd my ermine gown sell !
I wish I were a mile hence !
It's easy to bid one rack one's brain ;
I'm sure my poor head aches again,
I've scratched it so, and all in vain.
Oh for a trap, a trap, a trap !"
Just as he said this, what should hap
At the chamber door but a gentle tap ?
" Bless us !" cried the Mayor, " what's that ?
Only a scraping of shoes on the mat ?
Anything like the sound of a rat
Makes my heart go pit-a-pat !"

V.

" Come in !" the Mayor cried, looking bigger :
And in did come the strangest figure !



An hour they sat in council.

His queer long coat from heel to head
Was half of yellow and half of red ;
And he himself was tall and thin,
With sharp blue eyes, each like a pin,
And light loose hair, yet swarthy skin,
No tuft on cheek nor beard on chin,
But lips where smiles went out and in ;
There was no guessing his kith and kin :
And nobody could enough admire
The tall man and his quaint attire.
Quoth one : " It's as if my great-grandsire,
Starting up at the Trump of Doom's tone,
Had walked this way from his painted tomb-
stone ! "

VI.

He advanced to the council table :
And, " Please, your honours," said he, " I'm able
By means of a secret charm, to draw
All creatures living beneath the sun,
That creep, or swim, or fly, or run,
After me so as you never saw !
And I chiefly use my charm
On creatures that do people harm,
The mole and toad, and newt and viper :
And people call me the Pied Piper."
(And here they noticed round his neck
A scarf of red and yellow stripe,
To match his coat of the self-same check ;
And at the scarf's end hung a pipe ;

And his fingers, they noticed, were ever straying,

As if impatient to be playing
Upon this pipe, as low it dangled
Over his vesture so old-fangled.)

“Yet,” said he, “poor piper as I am,
In Tartary I freed the Cham

Last June from his huge swarms of gnats;
I eased in Asia the Nizam

Of a monstrous brood of vampire-bats:
And as for what your brain bewilders,

If I can rid your town of rats
Will you give me a thousand guilders?”
“One? fifty thousand!” was the exclamation
Of the astonished Mayor and Corporation.



VII.

Into the street the Piper stept,

Smiling first a little smile,
As if he knew what magic slept

In his quiet pipe the while;

Then, like a musical adept,

To blow the pipe his lips he wrinkled,

And green and blue his sharp eyes twinkled,

Like a candle-flame where salt is sprinkled;

And ere three shrill notes the pipe had uttered,

You heard as if an army muttered;

And the muttering grew to a grumbling;

And the grumbling grew to a mighty rumbling;

And out of the houses the rats came tumbling:

Great rats, small rats, lean rats, brawny rats,
Brown rats, black rats, gray rats, tawny rats,
Grave old plodders, gay young friskers,
Fathers, mothers, uncles, cousins,
Families by tens and dozens ;
Brothers, sisters, husbands, wives,
Followed the Piper for their lives.
From street to street he piped advancing,
And step for step they followed dancing,
Until they came to the river Weser,

Wherein all plunged and perished—
Save one, who, stout as Julius Cæsar,
Swam across and lived to carry

(As he the manuscript he cherished)
To Rat-land home his commentary,
Which was : “ At the first shrill notes of the pipe
I heard a sound as of scraping tripe,
And putting apples, wondrous ripe,
Into a cider press’s gripe ;
And a moving away of pickle-tub boards,
And a leaving ajar of conserve cupboards,
And a drawing the corks of train-oil flasks,
And a breaking the hoops of butter-casks ;
And it seemed as if a voice

(Sweeter far than by harp or by psaltery
Is breathed) called out, ‘ O rats, rejoice !

The world is grown to one vast drysaltery !
So munch on, crunch on, take your nuncheon,
Breakfast, dinner, supper, luncheon !’
And just as a bulky sugar-puncheon,

All ready staved, like a great sun shone
Glorious, scarce an inch before me,
Just as methought it said, 'Come, bore me!
I found the Weser rolling o'er me."

VIII.

You should have heard the Hamelin people
Ringing the bells till they rocked the steeple.
"Go," cried the Mayor, "and get long poles,
Poke out the nests, and block up the holes!

Consult with carpenters and builders,
And leave in our town not even a trace
Of the rats!"—when, suddenly, up the face
Of the Piper perked in the market-place

With a "First, if you please, my thousand
guilders."

IX.

A thousand guilders! The Mayor looked blue;
So did the Corporation too.
To pay this sum to a wandering fellow
With a gipsy coat of red and yellow!
"Besides," quoth the Mayor, with a knowing wink,
"Our business was done at the river's brink;
We saw with our eyes the vermin sink,
And what's dead can't come to life, I think.
So, friend, we're not the folks to shrink
From the duty of giving you something for drink,
And a matter of money to put in your poke;
But as for the guilders, what we spoke
Of them, as you very well know, was in joke;

Besides, our losses have made us thrifty.
A thousand guilders! Come, take fifty!"

X.

The Piper's face fell, and he cried :
"No trifling! I can't wait! Beside,
I've promised to visit by dinner time
Bagdat, and accept the prime
Of the head cook's pottage, all he's rich in,
For having left, in the Caliph's kitchen,
Of a nest of scorpions no survivor.
With him I proved no bargain driver;
With you, don't think I'll bate a stiver!
And folks who put me in a passion
May find me pipe to another fashion."



XI.

"How," cried the Mayor, "d'ye think I'll brook
Being worse treated than a cook?
Insulted by a lazy ribald
With idle pipe and vesture piebald?
You threaten us, fellow? Do your worst;
Blow your pipe there till you burst!"

XII.

Once more he stept into the street,
And to his lips again
Laid his long pipe of smooth straight cane;
And ere he blew three notes (such sweet,
Soft notes as yet musician's cunning
Never gave the enraptured air)

There was a rustling that seemed like a bustling
Of merry crowds justling at pitching and hust-
ling ;

Small feet were pattering, wooden shoes clat-
tering,

Little hands clapping, and little tongues chat-
tering.

And, like fowls in a farmyard when barley is
scattering,

Out came the children running ;

All the little boys and girls,

With rosy cheeks and flaxen curls,

And sparkling eyes and teeth like pearls,

Tripping and skipping, ran merrily after

The wonderful music with shouting and laughter.

XIII.

The Mayor was dumb, and the Council stood
As if they were changed into blocks of wood,
Unable to move a step, or cry

To the children merrily skipping by ;

And could only follow with the eye

That joyous crowd at the Piper's back.

And now the Mayor was on the rack,

And the wretched Council's bosoms beat,

As the Piper turned from the High Street

To where the Weser rolled its waters

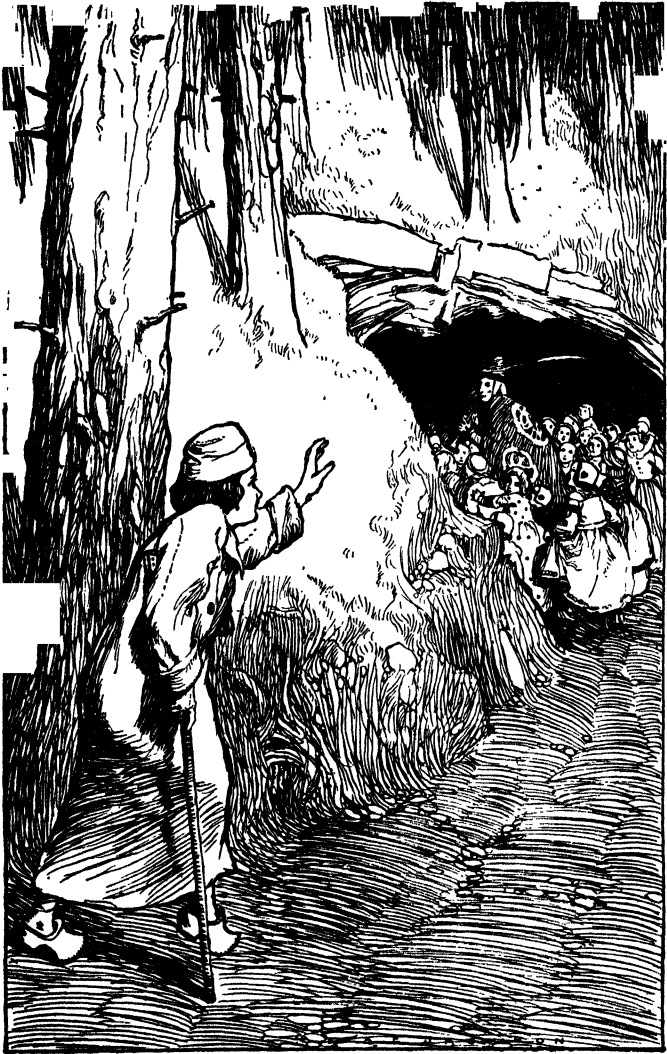
Right in the way of their sons and daughters !

However, he turned from south to west,

And to Koppelberg Hill his steps addressed,

And after him the children pressed :
Great was the joy in every breast.
"He never can cross that mighty top ;
He's forced to let the pipping drop,
And we shall see our children stop."
When, lo ! as they reached the mountain-side,
A wondrous portal opened wide,
As if a cavern was suddenly hollowed ;
And the Piper advanced and the children followed,
And when all were in to the very last,
The door in the mountain-side shut fast.
Did I say all ? No ! One was lame
And could not dance the whole of the way ;
And in after years, if you would blame
His sadness, he was used to say,
'It's dull in our town since my playmates left !
I can't forget that I'm bereft
Of all the pleasant sights they see,
Which the Piper also promised me ;
For he led us, he said, to a joyous land,
Joining the town and just at hand,
Where waters gushed and fruit trees grew,
And flowers put forth a fairer hue,
And everything was strange and new.
The sparrows were brighter than peacocks here,
And their dogs outran our fallow deer,
And honey-bees had lost their stings,
And horses were born with eagles' wings ;
And just as I became assured
My lame foot would be speedily cured,





A wondrous portal opened wide.

The music stopped and I stood still,
And found myself outside the hill,
Left alone against my will,
To go on limping as before,
And never hear of that country more !”

XIV.

Alas, alas, for Hamelin !
There came into many a burgher's pate
A text which says, that Heaven's gate
Opes to the rich at as easy rate
As the needle's eye takes a camel in !
The Mayor sent east, west, north, and south,
To offer the Piper, by word of mouth,
Wherever it was men's lot to find him,
Silver and gold to his heart's content,
If he'd only return the way he went,
And bring the children behind him.
But when they saw 'twas a lost endeavour,
And Piper and dancers were gone for ever,
They made a decree that lawyers never
Should think their records dated duly
If, after the day of the month and year,
These words did not as well appear,
' And so long after what happened here
On the twenty-second of July,
Thirteen hundred and seventy-six !”
And the better in memory to fix
The place of the children's last retreat
They called it the Pied Piper's Street,



Where any one playing on pipe or tabor
Was sure for the future to lose his labour.
Nor suffered they hostelry or tavern

To shock with mirth a street so solemn :
But opposite the place of the cavern

They wrote the story on a column,
And on the great church window painted
The same, to make the world acquainted
How their children were stolen away ;
And there it stands to this very day.

And I must not omit to say
That in Transylvania there's a tribe
Of alien people who ascribe
The outlandish ways and dress
On which their neighbours lay such stress,
To their fathers and mothers having risen
Out of some subterraneous prison
Into which they were trepanned
Long time ago in a mighty band
Out of Hamelin town in Brunswick land,
But how or why, they don't understand.

XV.

So, Willy, let you and me be wipers
Of scores out with all men, especially pipers !
And, whether they pipe us free from rats or
from mice,
If we've promised them aught, let us keep
our promise.

R. BROWNING.



THE SEA-KING'S BURIAL

" My strength is failing fast,"
Said the sea-king to his men ;—

" I shall never sail the seas
Like a conqueror again.

But while yet a drop remains
Of the life-blood in my veins,
Raise, oh, raise me from the bed,
Put the crown upon my head,
Put my good sword in my hand,
And so lead me to the strand,
Where my ship at anchor rides
Steadily !

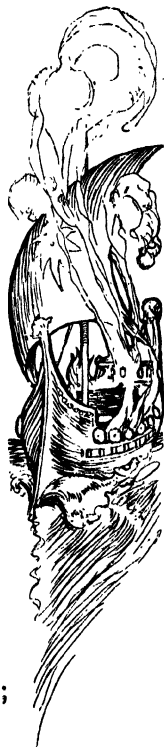
If I cannot end my life
In the crimsoned battle strife,
Let me die as I have lived,
On the sea."

They have raised King Balder up,
Put his crown upon his head ;
They have sheathed his limbs in mail,
And the purple o'er him spread ;
And amid the greeting rude
Of a gathering multitude,
Borne him slowly to the shore—
All the energy of yore
From his dim eyes flashing forth—
Old sea-lion of the north—
As he looked upon his ship
Riding free,

And on his forehead pale
Felt the cold, refreshing gale,
And heard the welcome sound
Of the sea.

They have borne him to the ship
With a slow and solemn tread ;
They have placed him on the deck,
With his crown upon his head
Where he sat as on a throne :
And have left him there alone,
With his anchor ready weighed,
And his snowy sails displayed
To the favouring winds, once more
Blowing freshly from the shore ;
And have bidden him farewell
Tenderly,
Saying, " King of mighty men,
We shall meet thee yet again,
In Valhalla, with the monarchs
Of the sea."

Underneath him in the hold
They have placed the lighted brand ;
And the fire was burning slow
As the vessel from the land,
Like a staghound from the slips,
Darted forth from out the ships.
There was music in her sail
As it swelled before the gale,



And in this hour of death,
Ere I yield my fleeting breath—
Ere the fire now burning slow
Shall come rushing from below,
And this worn and wasted frame
Be devoted to the flame—
I will raise my voice in triumph,
Singing free ;—
To the great All-Father's home
I am driving through the foam
I am sailing to Valhalla,
O'er the sea.

"So blow, ye stormy winds—
 And, ye flames, ascend on high;—
 In the easy, idle bed
 Let the slave and coward die!
 But give me the driving keel,
 Clang of shields and flashing steel:
 Or my foot on foreign ground,
 With my enemies around!
 Happy, happy, thus I'd yield,
 On the deck or in the field,
 My last breath, shouting, 'On
 To victory.'
 But since this has been denied,
 They shall say that I have died
 Without flinching, like a monarch
 Of the sea."

And Balder spoke no more,
And no sound escaped his lip ;
And he looked, yet scarcely saw
The destruction of his ship,
Nor the fleet sparks mounting high
Nor the glare upon the sky ;
Scarce heard the billows dash,
Nor the burning timber crash ;
Scarcely felt the scorching heat
That was gathering at his feet,
Nor the fierce flames mounting o'er him
Greedily.
But the life was in him yet,
And the courage to forget
All his pain, in his triumph
On the sea.

Once alone a cry arose,
Half of anguish, half of pride,
As he sprang upon his feet,
With the flames on every side.
"I am coming !" said the king,
"Where the swords and bucklers ring—
Where the warrior lives again
With the souls of mighty men—
Where the weary find repose,
And the red wine ever flows ;—
I am coming, great All-Father,
Unto thee !



The Sea King.
(From a drawing by H. W. Koekkoek.)

Unto Odin, unto Thor,
And the strong, true hearts of yore—
I am coming to Valhalla,
O'er the sea."

CHARLES MACKAY.

THE OUTLAW.



O BRIGNALL banks are wild and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer-queen.
And as I rode by Dalton Hall
Beneath the turrets high,
A Maiden on the castle-wall
Was singing merrily :
" O Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green ;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen."

" If, Maiden, thou wouldst wend with me,
To leave both tower and town,
Thou first must guess what life lead we
That dwell by dale and down.
And if thou canst that riddle read,
As read full well you may,
Then to the greenwood shalt thou speed
As blithe as Queen of May."

Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair
And Greta woods are green ;
I'd rather rove with Edmund there
Than reign our English queen.

"I read you, by your bugle-horn
And by your palfrey good,
I read you for a ranger sworn
To keep the king's greenwood."

"A ranger, lady, winds his horn,
And 'tis at peep of light ;
His blast is heard at merry morn,
And mine at dead of night."
Yet sung she, "Brignall banks are fair,
And Greta woods are gay ;
I would I were with Edmund there,
To reign his Queen of May !

"With burnished brand and musketoon
So gallantly you come,
I read you for a bold dragoon
That lists the tuck of drum."
"I list no more the tuck of drum,
No more the trumpet hear ;
But when the beetle sounds his hum
My comrades take the spear.
And oh ! though Brignall banks be fair,
And Greta woods be gay,
Yet mickle must the maiden dare
Would reign my Queen of May !



“Maiden ! a nameless life I lead,
A nameless death I'll die ;
The fiend whose lantern lights the mead
Were better mate than I !
And when I'm with my comrades met
Beneath the greenwood bough,
What once we were we all forget,
Nor think what we are now.”

Chorus.

“Yet Brignall banks are fresh and fair,
And Greta woods are green,
And you may gather garlands there
Would grace a summer-queen.”

SIR W. SCOTT.



THE SKELETON IN ARMOUR.

“Speak ! speak ! thou fearful guest !
Who, with thy hollow breast
Still in rude armour drest,
 Comest to daunt me !
Wrapped not in Eastern balms,
But with thy fleshless palms
Stretched, as if asking alms
 Why dost thou haunt me ?”

Then, from those cavernous eyes
Pale flashes seemed to rise,
As when the Northern skies
 Gleam in December ;
And, like the water's flow
Under December's snow,
Came a dull voice of woe
 From the heart's chamber.

“I was a Viking old !
My deeds, though manifold,
No Skald in song has told,
 No Saga taught thee !
Take heed, that in thy verse
Thou dost the tale rehearse,
Else dread a dead man's curse !
 For this I sought thee.

“ Far in the Northern Land,
By the wild Baltic’s strand,
I, with my childish hand,
 Tamed the ger-falcon ;
And, with my skates fast bound,
Skimmed the half-frozen Sound,
That the poor whimpering hound
 Trembled to walk on.



“ Oft to his frozen lair
Tracked I the grisly bear,
While from my path the hare
 Flew like a shadow ;
Oft through the forest dark
Followed the were-wolf’s bark,
Until the soaring lark
 Sang from the meadow.

“ But when I older grew,
Joining a corsair’s crew,
O’er the dark sea I flew
 With the marauders.
Wild with the life we led ;
Many the souls that sped,
Many the hearts that bled,
 By our stern orders.

“ Many a wassail-bout
Wore the long winter out ;
Often our midnight shout
 Set the cocks crowing,

As we the Berserk's tale
Measured in cups of ale,
Draining the oaken pail,
Filled to o'erflowing.

"Once, as I told in glee
Tales of the stormy sea,
Soft eyes did gaze on me,
Burning, yet tender;
And as the white stars shine
On the dark Norway pine,
On that dark heart of mine
Fell their soft splendour

"I wooed the blue-eyed maid,
Yielding, yet half afraid,
And in the forest's shade
Our vows were plighted.
Under its loosened vest
Fluttered her tender breast,
Like bird within its nest
By the hawk frightened.

"Bright in her father's hall
Shields gleamed upon the wall,
Loud sang the minstrels all,
Chanting his glory;
When of old Hildebrand
I asked his daughter's hand.
Mute did the minstrel stand
To hear my story.

“ While the brown ale he quaffed,
Loud then the champion laughed,
And as the wind-gusts waft
 The sea-foam brightly,
So the loud laugh of scorn,
Out of those lips unshorn,
From the deep drinking-horn
 Blew the foam lightly.

“ She was a Prince’s child,
I but a Viking wild,
And though she blushed and smiled,
 I was discarded !
Should not the dove so white
Follow the sea-mew’s flight,
Why did they leave that night
 Her nest unguarded ?

“ Scarce had I put to sea,
Bearing the maid with me,—
Fairest of all was she
 Among the Norsemen !—
When on the white sea-strand,
Waving his armèd hand,
Saw we old Hildebrand,
 With twenty horsemen.

“ Then launched they to the blast,
Bent like a reed each mast,
Yet we were gaining fast,
 When the wind failed us ;

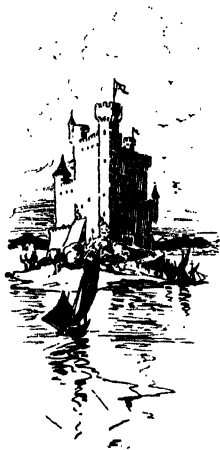


'On the white sea-strand saw we old Hildebrand.'

And with a sudden flaw
 Came round the gusty Skaw,
 So that our foe we saw
 Laugh as he hailed us.

‘ And as to catch the gale
 Round veered the flapping sail,
 ‘ Death ! ’ was the helmsman’s hail,
 ‘ Death without quarter ! ’
 Midships with iron keel
 Struck we her ribs of steel ;
 Down her black hulk did reel
 Through the black water.

“ As with his wings aslant
 Sails the fierce cormorant,
 Seeking some rocky haunt,
 With his prey laden,
 So toward the open main,
 Beating the sea again,
 Through the wild hurricane,
 Bore I the maiden.



“ Three weeks we westward bore
 And when the storm was o’er,
 Cloud-like we saw the shore
 Stretching to leeward :
 There for my lady’s bower
 Built I the lofty tower,
 Which, to this very hour,
 Stands looking seaward.

" There lived we many years.
Time dried the maiden's tears ;
She had forgot her fears,
 She was a mother.
Death closed her mild blue eyes
Under that tower she lies :
Ne'er shall the sun arise
 On such another !

" Still grew my bosom then.
Still as a stagnant fen !
Hateful to me were men,
 The sunlight hateful
In the vast forest here,
Clad in my warlike gear,
Fell I upon my spear,
 Oh, death was grateful !

" Thus, seamed with many scars
Bursting these prison bars,
Up to its native stars
 My soul ascended !
There from the flowing bowl
Deep drinks the warrior's soul,
Skoal to the Northland ! *Skoal !*"
—Thus the tale ended.

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THE LADY OF SHALOTT.

PART I.

*Lord Tennyson.*

ON either side the river lie
 Long fields of barley and of rye,
 That clothe the wold and meet the sky ;
 And through the field the road runs by
 To many-towered Camelot ;
 And up and down the people go,
 Gazing where the lilies blow
 Round an island there below,
 The island of Shalott.

Willows whiten, aspens quiver,
 Little breezes dusk and shiver
 Through the wave that runs for ever
 By the island in the river

 Flowing down to Camelot.
 Four gray walls, and four gray towers,
 Overlook a space of flowers,
 And the silent isle embowers
 The Lady of Shalott.

By the margin, willow-veiled,
 Slide the heavy barges trailed
 By slow horses ; and unhailed
 The shallop flitteth silken-sailed

 Skimming down to Camelot :
 But who hath seen her wave her hand ?
 Or at the casement seen her stand
 Or is she known in all the land,
 The Lady of Shalott ?

Only reapers, reaping early
In among the bearded barley,
Hear a song that echoes cheerly
From the river winding clearly,
 Down to towered Camelot :
And by the moon the reaper weary,
Piling sheaves in uplands airy,
Listening, whispers " 'Tis the fairy
 Lady of Shalott."

PART II.

There she weaves by night and day
A magic web with colours gay.
She has heard a whisper say,
A curse is on her if she stay
 To look down to Camelot.
She knows not what the curse may be,
And so she weaveth steadily,
And little other care hath she,
 The Lady of Shalott.

And moving through a mirror clear
That hangs before her all the year,
Shadows of the world appear.
There she sees the highway near
 Winding down to Camelot :
There the river eddy whirls,
And there the surly village churls,
And the red cloaks of market girls,
 Pass onward from Shalott.

Sometimes a troop of damsels glad,
An abbot on an ambling pad,
Sometimes a curly shepherd-lad,
Or long-haired page in crimson clad,
 Goes by to towered Camelot ;
And sometimes through the mirror blue
The knights come riding two and two :
She hath no loyal knight and true,
 The Lady of Shalott.

But in her web she still delights
To weave the mirror's magic sights
For often through the silent nights
A funeral, with plumes and lights
 And music, went to Camelot :
Or when the moon was overhead,
Came two young lovers lately wed, —
"I am half sick of shadows," said
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART III.

A bowshot from her bower-eaves,
He rode between the barley sheaves ;
The sun came dazzling through the leaves,
And flamed upon the brazen greaves
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.
A red-cross knight for ever kneeled
To a lady in his shield,
That sparkled on the yellow field,
 Beside remote Shalott.



She left the web, she left the loom.
(See page 259.)

The gemmy bridle glittered free,
Like to some branch of stars we see
Hung in the golden Galaxy.
The bridle bells rang merrily

As he rode down to Camelot:
And from his blazoned baldric slung
A mighty silver bugle hung,
And as he rode his armour rung
Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
Thick-jewelled shone the saddle-leather,
The helmet and the helmet-feather
Burned like one burning flame together,

As he rode down to Camelot:
As often through the purple night,
Below the starry clusters bright,
Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glowed;
On burnished hooves his war-horse trode;
From underneath his helmet flowed
His coal-black curls as on he rode,

As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flashed into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra," by the river,
Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces through the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
 She looked down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror cracked from side to side :
“ The curse is come upon me,” cried
 The Lady of Shalott.

PART IV.

In the stormy east wind straining,
The pale yellow woods were waning,
The broad stream in his banks complaining,
Heavily the low sky raining
 Over towered Camelot ;
Down she came and found a boat
Beneath a willow left afloat,
And round about the prow she wrote
 The Lady of Shalott.

And down the river's dim expanse
Like some bold seer in a trance,
Seeing all his own mischance—
With a glassy countenance
 Did she look to Camelot.
And at the closing of the day
She loosed the chain, and down she lay ;
The broad stream bore her far away,
 The Lady of Shalott.



Lying, robed in snowy white
That loosely flew to left and right
The leaves upon her falling light—
Through the noises of the night
 She floated down to Camelot;
And as the boat-head wound along
The willowy hills and fields among,
They heard her singing her last song,
 The Lady of Shalott—

Heard a carol, mournful, holy,
Chanted loudly, chanted lowly,
Till her blood was frozen slowly,
And her eyes were darkened wholly,
 Turned to towered Camelot;
For ere she reached upon the tide
The first house by the water-side,
Singing in her song she died,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Under tower and balcony,
By garden wall and gallery,
A gleaming shape she floated by,
Dead pale between the houses high
 Silent into Camelot.
Out upon the wharfs they came,
Knight and burgher, lord and dame,
And round the prow they read her name,
 The Lady of Shalott.

Who is this ? and what is here ?
And in the lighted palace near
Died the sound of royal cheer ;
And they crossed themselves for fear,
All the knights of Camelot.
But Lancelot mused a little space ;
He said, " She has a lovely face ;
God in His mercy lend her grace
The Lady of Shalott."

LORD TENNYSON.

MARY AMBREE.

WHEN captains courageous, whom death could not
daunt,
Did march to the siege of the city of Gaunt,
They mustered their soldiers by two and by
three,
And the foremost in battle was Mary Ambree.

When brave Sir John Major was slain in her
sight,
Who was her true lover, her joy, and delight,
Because he was slain most treacherously,
Then vowed to revenge him Mary Ambree.

She clothed herself from the top to the toe
In buff of the bravest, most seemly to show ;
A fair shirt of mail then slipped on she :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?



A helmet of proof she straight did provide,
A strong arming sword she girt by her side,
On her hand a goodly fair gauntlet put she :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

Then took she her sword and her target in hand,
Bidding all such as would be of her band ;
To wait on her person came thousand and three :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

“ My soldiers,” she saith, “ so valiant and bold,
Now follow your captain, whom you do behold ;
Still foremost in battle myself will I be : ”
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

Then cried out her soldiers, and loud they did say,
“ So well thou becomest this gallant array,
Thy heart and thy weapons so well do agree,
There was none ever like Mary Ambree.”

She cheerèd her soldiers, that fought for life,
With ancient and standard, with drum and with fife,
With brave clanging trumpets that sounded so free :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

“ Before I will see the worst of you all
To come into danger of death or of thrall,
This hand and this life I will venture so free ! ”
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

She led up her soldiers in battle array,
'Gainst three times their numbers, by break of the
day ;

Seven hours in skirmish continuèd she :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

She filled the skies with the smoke of her shot,
And her enemies' bodies with bullets so hot ;
For one of her own men a score killèd she :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

And when her false gunner, to spoil her intent,
Away all her pellets and powder had sent,
Straight with her keen weapon she slashed him in
three :

Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

Being falsely betrayèd for lucre of hire,
At length she was forcèd to make a retire ;
Then her soldiers into a strong castle drew she :
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree ?

Her foes they beset her on every side,
As thinking close siege she could never abide ;
To beat down the walls they all did decree,
But stoutly defied them brave Mary Ambree.

Then took she her sword and her target in hand,
And mounting the walls all undaunted did stand,
There daring their captains to match any three :
Oh what a brave captain was Mary Ambree !

“ Now say, English captain, what wouldest thou give
To ransom thyself, which else must not live ?
Come, yield thyself quickly, or slain thou must be.”
Then smiled sweetly brave Mary Ambree.

“ Ye captains courageous, of valour so bold,
Whom think you before you now you do behold ?”—
“ A knight, sir, of England, and captain so free,
Who shortly with us must a prisoner be.”—

“ No knight, sirs, of England, nor captain you see,
But a poor simple lass called Mary Ambree.”—

‘ But art thou a woman, as thou dost declare,
Whose valour hath proved so undaunted in war ?
If England doth yield such brave lasses as thee,
Full well may they conquer, fair Mary Ambree.”

The Prince of Great Parma heard of her renown,
Who long had advanced for England’s fair crown ;
He wooed her and sued her his mistress to be,
And offered rich presents to Mary Ambree.

But to her own country she back did return,
Still holding the foes of fair England in scorn ;
Therefore, English captains of every degree,
Sing forth the brave valours of Mary Ambree.

Old Ballad.

A LEGEND OF BREGENZ.

GIRT round with rugged mountains

The fair Lake Constance lies ;

In her blue heart reflected,

Shine back the starry skies ;

And watching each white cloudlet

Float silently and slow,

You think a piece of heaven

Lies on our earth below.



Midnight is there : and Silence,

Enthroned in heaven, looks down

Upon her own calm mirror,

Upon a sleeping town ;

For Bregenz, that quaint city

Upon the Tyrol shore,

Has stood above Lake Constance

A thousand years and more.

Her battlements and towers

Upon their rocky steep

Have cast their trembling shadow

For ages on the deep ;

Mountain and lake and valley

A sacred legend know,

Of how the town was saved one night

Three hundred years ago.

Far from her home and kindred
A Tyrol maid had fled,
To serve in the Swiss valleys,
And toil for daily bread ;
And every year that fled
So silently and fast
Seemed to bear further from her
The memory of the past.

She spoke no more of Bregenz
With longing and with tears ;
Her Tyrol home seemed faded
In a deep mist of years.
She heeded not the rumours
Of Austrian war and strife ;
Each day she rose contented
To the calm toils of life.

Yet, when her master's children
Would clustering round her stand,
She sang them the old ballads
Of her own native land ;
And when at morn and evening
She knelt before God's throne,
The accents of her childhood
Rose to her lips alone.

And so she dwelt : the valley
More peaceful year by year ;
When suddenly strange portents
Of some great deed seemed near.



*Her master's children
Would clustering round her stand.*

One day, out in the meadow,
With strangers from the town,
Some secret plan discussing,
The men walked up and down.

At eve they all assembled,
All care and doubt were fled
With jovial laugh they feasted,
The board was nobly spread.
The elder of the village
Rose up, his glass in hand,
And cried, " We drink the downfall
Of an accursèd land !

" The night is growing darker—
Ere one more day is flown,
Bregenz, our foeman's stronghold,
Bregenz shall be our own ! "
The women shrank in terror,
(Yet Pride, too, had her part),
But one poor Tyrol maiden
Felt death within her heart.

Nothing she heard around her
(Though shouts rang forth again);
Gone were the green Swiss valleys,
The pasture, and the plain :
Before her eyes one vision,
And in her heart one cry,
That said, " Go forth, save Bregenz ;
And then, if need be, die ! "

With trembling haste and breathless
With noiseless step she sped—
Horses and weary cattle
Were standing in the shed.
She loosed the strong white charger
That fed from out her hand ;
She mounted, and she turned his head
Toward her native land.

Out—out into the darkness—
Faster, and still more fast ;
The smooth grass flies behind her,
The chestnut wood is past.
She looks up : clouds are heavy ;—
Why is her steed so slow ?—
Scarcely the wind beside them
Can pass them as they go.



“Faster !” she cries, “oh, faster !”
Eleven the church-bells chime ;
“O God,” she cries, “help Bregenz,
And bring me there in time !”
But louder than bells’ ringing,
Or lowing of the kine,
Grows nearer in the midnight
The rushing of the Rhine.

She strives to pierce the blackness,
And looser throws the rein ;
Her steed must breast the waters
That dash above his mane

How gallantly, how nobly
He struggles through the foam !
And see, in the far distance
Shine out the lights of home !

Up the steep bank he bears her
And now they rush again
Towards the heights of Bregenz,
That tower above the plain.
They reach the gate of Bregenz
Just as the midnight rings,
And out come serf and soldier
To meet the news she brings.

Bregenz is saved !—ere daylight
Her battlements are manned
Defiance greets the army
That marches on the land.
And if to deeds heroic
Should endless fame be paid,
Bregenz does well to honour
The noble Tyrol maid.

Three hundred years are vanished.
And yet upon the hill
An old stone gateway rises
To do her honour still.
And there, when Bregenz women
Sit spinning in the shade,
They see in quaint old carving
The charger and the maid.

And when, to guard old Bregenz,
By gateway, street, and tower,
The warder paces all night long,
And calls each passing hour- -
“ Nine,” “ ten,” “ eleven,” he cries aloud,
And then (O crown of Fame !)
When midnight pauses in the skies,
He calls the maiden’s name !

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